

# *The Elementary English Review*

NOVEMBER 1946

## **CHILDREN AND THEIR BOOKS**

CHARLEMAE ROLLINS

GRACE D. BAILEY

MARY B. DEATON

CLARA WILSON

CLARA EVANS

and

The Reviewing Staff

## **EXPERIENCES IN COMMUNICATION**

LOIS DE LA HUNT

JOHN H. TREANOR

LINDA CLEORA SMITH

RALPH C. PRESTON

WILLIAM H. LAMERS

## **THE ATLANTIC CITY PROGRAM**

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

# The Elementary English Review

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH  
211 W. 68th St., Chicago 21, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

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### Published

October through May  
\$2.50 per year

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THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW is published monthly from October to May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 211 West 68th Street, Chicago, Illinois. Subscription price \$2.50 per year; single copies 40 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single-copy rate. Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rico, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoan Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows: 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$2.74), on single copies 3 cents (total 43 cents.) Patrons are requested to make all remittances payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago, Illinois. Entered as second class matter December 29, 1942, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

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# THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

VOL. XXIII

NOVEMBER 1946

No. 7

## New Trends in Books About Negroes for Children and Young People

CHARLEMAE ROLLINS<sup>1</sup>

The Midwestern Writers' Conference in 1944 included this significant clause in its pledge: "We believe it is the writer's duty to maintain vigilance against all forms of prejudice and thus promote tolerance toward all races and all creeds."

This is indeed heartening to those who are actively concerned with books and reading for children and young people, particularly those books that deal with Negro life. In the portrayal of children of other countries as well as the minorities in our own country, the Negro child in literature has suffered most because of lack of perception and characterization. During the past five years, however, the word "democracy" has become a growing reality in many books on Negro life written for youth.

The problem of Negro-white relationships is one of the most vital in America, yet when it is presented frankly to young people a storm of protest arises. Until recently few authors or publishers have been brave enough to bring youth face to face with this issue

in books. However, there has been a growing recognition of the need for books of this kind and it is encouraging to find a few in all age groups.

Beginning with picture books for the very young child, we find that two are particularly significant. *Two is a Team* by Lorraine and Jerrold Beim (Harcourt) shows, without preaching or moralizing, how two little boys, one white and one black, live, work, and play together. *Spotty*, an appealing animal story by H. A. Rey (Harpers), tells an unmistakable yet heart-warming tale of a bunny who is rejected because he is different from his all-white rabbit family.

Marguerite de Angeli has done one of the most delightful of all the 1946 stories for girls in the middle grades: *Bright April* (Doubleday), about the only little Negro girl in a Brownie Scout troop. It describes the normal experiences of a group of children without

<sup>1</sup>Children's Librarian in the Hall Branch of the Chicago Public Library, and author of the Council publication, *We Build Together*.

sentimentality or cloying sweetness. Not only is the book timely and interesting, but the illustrations in typical de Angeli fashion make April a thoroughly lovable child. It is sincerely hoped that this will be the forerunner of many similar books. *Call Me Charley* by Jesse Jackson (Harper), is another true-to-life story, dealing with the ever-present problem of the only Negro child in a junior high school. Perhaps not quite so skillfully handled as it might have been, it gives the thoughtful youngster a chance to question his own set of values about Negroes. *Melindy's Medal* by Georgene Faulkner and John Becker (Messner), is an unusual story about a Negro girl in a modern housing project in Boston, who carries on the tradition of bravery in her family with an act of real courage. By implication it shows how faithfully and courageously the Negro has upheld his part in our democracy.

For older boys and girls a great need still exists for more books facing the problem of the mixture of Negro and white children in our society. John Tunis still heads the list of writers in this field with his forthright presentations appealing to the instincts of fair play and good sportsmanship, while showing the way towards democracy. His *All-American* (Harcourt) is the thrilling story of a Negro boy and his high school football team that refuses to play with another school that is unwilling to accept them as a team, and this group learns to practice democracy. *Up at City High* by Joseph Gollomb (Harcourt), another thought-provoking high school story, though not so well done as the Tunis book, will stimulate young people to find their own solutions to such problems. Not fiction, but certainly a book to help build better human relationships, is Arna Bontemps' *We Have Tomorrow* (Houghton). These are biographies of twelve young Negro-Americans doing things which Negroes have never done before—and doing them not as Negroes but

as Americans. Mr. Bontemps introduces the book with the hope that their stories "may prove to be the beginning of a fulfillment of the American promise."

Illustrators also have become aware of the differences in types of Negroes, and they draw fewer of the unkind, ridiculing caricatures found in earlier children's books. More and more artists are including appealing and attractive Negro children as a natural and accepted part of any group showing the many racial types which make up America and the world. Outstanding among such artists is Elizabeth Orton Jones, whose illustrations for *A Prayer for a Child*, by Rachel Field (Macmillan), won the Caldecott Award for 1945, in striking contrast to the 1946 Caldecott Award book, *The Rooster Crows* by Maud and Miska Petersham (Macmillan), with its stereotype of the Negro child and its obscure folk rhyme in dialect.

*Small Rain*, also by Miss Jones, (Viking) shows children of all races playing happily together and speaks more clearly than many sermons. A different type of picture story for children is *My Happy Days*, by Jane Shackelford (Associated), with its photographic studies of Negro child life. Miss Shackelford, a Negro teacher, tells through her camera and text how the average middle-class Negro family lives. *My Dog Rinty*, by Ellen Tarry and Marie Hall Ets (Viking), is a good story with a timely message for the middle grades, and has stunning photographic illustrations by Alexander and Alexandra Alland showing what life is like in Harlem today.

Another encouraging and significant trend is found in the treatment of Negro minor characters. The Negro is now being accepted as an integral part of the American scene, rather than as a peculiar and separate unit. The well-known stage and screen type—a naive, stupid, shiftless, and superstitious clown—is being replaced by more representative

and lifelike characters. Among outstanding books with Negroes as minor characters who are treated without condescension or ridicule are *The Welcome*, by Babette Deutsch (Harper), *Submarine Sailor* by Gregor Felsen (Dutton), *The Company Owns the Tools* by Henry Vicar (Westminster), and *Homer Price* by Robert McCloskey (Viking).

A few authors still seem to feel that the Negro menial in books—whether the scene is New Jersey or Alabama—must speak in a thick, unnatural dialect. This is a convention, and quite unlike the dialect used in *Uncle Remus* and other volumes of an earlier era which were extremely accurate as a rendering of Negro speech, but were difficult—almost impossible—for the average child to read. The majority of sincere, careful writers today are learning to reproduce the idiomatic individuality that characterizes the speech of Negroes from various sections of the South. Arna Bon-temps, a Negro author, in *Sad-Faced Boy* (Houghton), set a good example of flavorful "Negro speech." His conversations are typical of the way certain Negroes speak, yet he uses practically no distortions of spelling.

Another extremely heartening sign is the omission of such derisive terms as "nigger, darkey, pickaninny, and coon" from children's books. Even "Rastus" and "Sambo" seem to be disappearing also.

Editors of anthologies of biography, science, poetry, literature, music, and art, are realizing more and more that in order to have a really representative volume, the Negroes' part in our culture must not be overlooked.

Outstanding examples are the stories in *Told Under the Stars and Stripes*, collected by the Association for Childhood Education (1945), the poems in Blanche Thompson's *Silver Pennies* (Macmillan), and the biographies in Edna Yost's *Modern Americans in Science and Invention* (Stokes), which all include the work of one or more Negroes as outstanding in their fields.

The fact that the Negro press is helping to make Negroes themselves more aware of the books written for them, about them, and by them, is also a significant trend. Every leading Negro magazine and newspaper includes some form of book comment to stimulate and create a better informed reading public. So that writers and publishers may continue to give us books to inspire us with pride and encourage us to hope that, in spite of race riots, school strikes, and other disturbing events, a better understanding is growing in America, we as Negroes must do our part.

Teachers, librarians, parents, and all those interested in intergroup relations, must continue to demand the right kinds of books about Negroes, the ones that give a true picture of the race and its contributions to American life. We must talk about them in our religious and political meetings as well as in our literary and P. T. A. groups. We must ask for them in public libraries and see that they are in our school and church libraries as well as in our homes. We must continue to write letters to publishers, editors, and authors, commending them for so courageously giving us the tools with which to combat racial and class discrimination in America.

# A Lesson Using Radio in the Classroom

GRACE D. BAILEY<sup>1</sup>

The following description of a lesson taught in the sixth grade of the University Laboratory School of Louisiana State University offers suggestions for the use of radio in the classroom. The purpose of the lesson was to demonstrate some of the techniques and values of radio instruction and to better acquaint the teachers with the series of radio programs "Books Bring Adventure."<sup>2</sup> Transcriptions of the books adopted for radio were bought by Louisiana State University and were broadcast during the year (1945-1946), through the facilities of WJBO.

## I. OBJECTIVES

- a. To give the child a happy experience.
- b. To use the radio as a means of developing an interest in reading good books.
- c. To lead the pupil to understand that radio broadcasts make good material for conversation and discussion.
- d. To arouse children's interest in studying and seeking further information about places, people, tribes, animals, and things mentioned in the story.
- e. To develop discriminating listening habits.
- f. To get ideas for planning, creating, and producing a simulation of a radio program based on the unit the children were studying.

## II. PREPARATION BY THE TEACHER

- a. Read radio script of the story.
- b. Listened to the transcription.
- c. Prepared questions to stimulate conversation and discussion.

- d. Read the book from which radio script was written.
- e. Located reference material containing information about places, people, animals, and things mentioned in the story.
- f. Located books with stories similar to *Mocha the Djuka*.

## III. INTRODUCTION OF THE RECORDING

1. Do you like to listen to the radio? What is your favorite program? The radio is going to bring you a new program. The stories of some very good books have been made into plays and transcriptions have been made of them. WJBO is going to broadcast the transcriptions so that you girls and boys might become acquainted with these good books. This morning we are going to listen to one of the recordings which will be broadcast. The story of the recording is taken from the book, *Mocha the Djuka*, by Frances Fullerton Neilson.

Mocha, the hero of the story, is a little boy about your age. He is a member of one of the Djuka tribes which live in the jungles of Dutch Guiana. Let us locate Dutch Guiana on the map. Have you ever read any books which describe life in the jungles? Recall the titles of books or stories you have read recently which

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor of Education, Louisiana State University.

<sup>2</sup>Association of Junior Leagues of America, Inc. The Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York 22, New York.



describe primitive ways of living. Perhaps you would like to tell something about the animals, birds, plants, or people who live in the jungles. (The children were given time to answer the question and to discuss the points suggested by the teacher.)

As the story begins you will hear the sound made by Mocha paddling his boat as it moves along a sluggish jungle river. Later you will hear the sound of a motor boat. On it are three of the main characters: Terry, an American boy who is about the same age as Mocha, his father, Professor Jones, and the villain of the story, Mr. Smith. Do you have an idea of why they are visiting the land of the Djukas? (This question introduced the children to a sequence of possible incidents and led up to the most exciting adventure in the story. It gave them an opportunity to use their imagination and made them listen carefully to see if their predictions came true.)

#### IV. LISTENING TO THE RECORDING

Let us listen to find out what happened while Terry, his father, and Mr. Smith visited Mocha in the land of the Djukas.

(Before the lesson the children were encouraged to listen courteously and develop good listening habits. There was an attempt to teach them to regard the lesson as a happy class experience.)

#### V. FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

##### A. Language Activities.

1. After listening to the recording the children were given an opportunity to express themselves spontaneously. To bring out certain points and to promote further dis-

cussions the teacher had prepared the following questions:

- a. What was the most exciting part of the story? How did it make you feel?
  - b. If you were left alone with a little tribesman just your age in a strange jungle village, would you make friends with him?
  - c. How did you feel as the boys went through the jungle to Mocha's secret cave? Why do you suppose he shared it with Terry?
  - d. Can you describe Mocha's pet, Tamandua, the ant-eater?
  - e. What impressions did you get about the way the natives live in the jungle?
  - f. What exciting thing did Mocha and Terry do that proved they were really brave?
  - g. How did Terry's father learn about Mocha's secret cave?
  - h. Why did Mocha object to Mr. Smith's seeing the cave?
  - i. Did you like the ending of the story? Why?
2. The questions gave the children an opportunity to express themselves according to their abilities. Some children, while explaining or describing certain parts or episodes, expressed what they wanted to say in a few short sentences; other children wrote papers after the lesson, and told how certain parts of the recording affected them; other children gave long talks involving a description or explanation of a sequence of incidents. Some of the children told what

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they thought about certain characters or situations. Examples of the papers are given below:

## I

I thought it was thrilling when Terry and Mocha escaped the dangerous whirlpool.

I wish the recording had told what Terry did with the big diamond.

I thought Mr. Smith was a ruthless villain when he killed the ant eater. I think he killed it so he could get across the river to the cave so he could get some of the gold.

I thought it was brave of Professor Jones to tell Mr. Smith that the piece of gold that Terry got out of the cave was granite rock.

JOHN

## II

The part where Mocha and Terry met and parted made me tingle all over.

When they beat the death drums I was terrified.

PIERCE

## III

I thought the most exciting part of *Mocha the Djuka* was when Mocha and Terry were almost caught in the whirlpool. They had to struggle to get out. Hearing this made my arms so tired that I couldn't move them.

STEPHEN

## IV

I think Mr. Smith is the kind of man that we do not want in the United States.

HELEN

## V

The reason I like Professor Jones so much is because when he found the cave of gold and diamonds he left them undisturbed for their rightful owners, the Djukas. Professor Jones was a man that our country could be proud of. I don't think that he believed in taking happiness away from a happy people. It takes a real man to turn down a fortune to make natives like Mocha and his people happy. Professor Jones knew if he told the world about the gold in the cave that the Djukas could never be happy anymore so that is why he told Mr. Smith that the cave had granite rock.

EVELYN

## VI

I wish that the story had continued and that it had told what happened to Terry and his diamond. I wonder if it really took him back to Mocha or not and if his father finally found the rare plants he wanted.

GEORGE

This last paper gave the teacher an excellent opportunity to ask George if he would write another "chapter" to the book and tell how he would like for the story to have ended.

## B. Reading Activities

1. The recording motivated the reading of good books.

Books with stories depicting jungle life or primitive ways of living were on hand and shown to

the children during the lesson to illustrate some phase of the discussion. Later the books proved quite popular. Of course, *Mocha the Djuka* was one of the books. A waiting list was made as it was in such demand. Then surely the question as to whether broadcasting the stories will make the children who listen interested in reading the books was answered in the affirmative by the children hearing the broadcast of *Mocha the Djuka*. A few of the books shown to the children are given below:

Gates, Arthur I. and Jean Ayer, *Let's Travel On*, "South Sea Playmates," New York: The MacMillan Company, 1943, pp. 371-385.

Neilson, Frances F., *Mocha the Djuka*, New York; E. P. Dutton and Company, 1943.

Parker, Beryl and Julia M. Harris, *Exploring New Fields*, "Children of the South Seas," New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938, pp. 93-159.

Sperry, Armstrong, *Call it Courage*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, *Coconut The Wonder Tree*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942.

Steen, Elizabeth K., *Red Jungle Boy*, New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1937.

2. The broadcast aroused the children's curiosity about the places, animals, people, and things men-

tioned in the story. *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia* was referred to and volumes G-H and S were found to have valuable information about Dutch Guiana, South America, and the things which the children wanted to find information about.

One little girl became interested in the ant-eater. She wrote:

If you want to see a pair of anteaters look in *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia*, Volume A, on page 220.

### C. Creative Activities

1. One child stated that she got the idea of giving a make-believe radio program based on the unit the children were studying. The teacher used the suggestion and to center the child's attention on the mechanical parts of the transcriptions she asked:
  - a. Did you like the way the story was introduced? Why?
  - b. What did the announcer tell you first of all?
  - c. Do you know why the announcer interrupted from time to time?
  - d. What is the use of the music? (One child remarked, "It is mood music." Another said, "It takes the place of the curtain.")
  - e. How do you suppose they made the following sound effects:
    - (1) Sound of the river
    - (2) Motor boat
    - (3) Drum
    - (4) Sounds of the jungle

- (5) Paddling of the boat in the river
  - (6) The rapids in the river
  - (7) Snuffling of Tamandua (the ant-eater)
  - (8) Footsteps in the underbrush
2. One child described Mocha's cave in the jungle. The teacher remarked that he had described it so vividly that his word picture could be kept if he would make a drawing of it.
  3. There was an opportunity for creative writing. Several of the children felt unhappy because the book ended without telling if Mocha and Terry were united again. When the teacher suggested that they write their idea of a happier ending, several children did so. Some children took Terry back to the land of the Djukas. One boy brought Mocha to one of our large cities and let Terry tell him about some of its wonders.

In all probability the teacher will not be able to hear the transcription as a part of her preparation. She should read the book from which the story is taken and make it and books with similar stories available for the children. In order for children to depend on the ear as a source of information it is suggested that the pictures of the characters and other illustrations in the book be withheld until after they have heard the story and constructed their own images.

The introduction should be short and well-planned so that the pupils will be able to observe more closely; it should arouse interest and stimulate purposeful listening.

In the follow up activities children should work informally. After a planning period they could form in groups or committees and work according to their interests. This does not mean that all activities mentioned should be engaged in after hearing each broadcast. They were suggested in an attempt to point out a few of the instructional values of the radio.

An evaluation of the use of radio as a teaching aid can be made by comparing the description of the follow up activities with the objectives of the lesson. The experiences provided opportunities for improving the child's listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. It was evident that the children were interested in reading Mocha the Djuka and other books with similar stories. Much interest was shown in the announcement of the future broadcast of "Books Bring Adventure." These observations seem to indicate that opportunities to develop an appreciation of good literature and discriminating listening habits were provided.

Perhaps the most important outcome was the socializing experience had while sharing the delightful programs. Such occasions, no doubt, contribute to the development of desirable attitudes toward classmates, the school, and the teacher.

#### Magazine Articles

Gordon, Ruth. "Radio for Children: Ours, Our Allies, Our Enemies," *The Elementary English Review*, XXI, (April, 1944), 130-134.

Leonard, Emily C. "Radio Transcriptions in Upper Grade English," *The Elementary English Review*, XXI, (April, 1944), 268-272.

Stasney, Kathryn. "Language Drills from Radio Thrills," *The Elementary English Review*, XX, (November, 1943), 264-268.



# Are We Teaching Communication?

LOIS DE LA HUNT<sup>1</sup>

In what grade should children begin to take notes while another child gives a report? Are the using of acceptable English and the employing of complete sentence form being taught as tools for a purpose, or as practice for the sake of practice? Are children exhibiting any amount of competence in the independent use of the many skills being taught? In which grades do children attain independence in the use of such skills?

These are questions which face anyone who is doing curriculum study in the field of the language arts. In order to secure such information in the Minneapolis Elementary Schools, a questionnaire was devised in April, 1946 on which teachers in grades four, five, and six could record their practices for later study of curriculum workers.

From the results of the survey a further purpose was to determine (1) which of the skills necessary for effective communication were being given emphasis, (2) whether they were being taught as communication or merely as segregated skills, (3) whether constructive teaching in these skills accompanied the use of them in the classroom, and (4) what degree of independence was exhibited by the pupils in their use of these tools. The questionnaire, which follows, shows how the evidence was recorded.

## *Present Practices in The Language Arts, Grades 4, 5, 6*

PART I of the directions printed below suggests six ways in which an item may have received attention.

For example, A—As drill to learn how or as practice to develop skill; B—In the course of studying other subjects.

Will you put an A in Column 1 after Item 1-A if you have *often* given, within the past month, a drill lesson on how to use the dictionary.

If you have given such a drill lesson *sometimes* in the last month, put an A in Column 2 after Item 1-A.

If you have not given such a drill lesson at all in the last month, put the A in Column 3.

Please indicate in this way the kind and amount of attention you have given *each item* listed below in your classroom *during this past month*.

If, for example, you have taught the use of the dictionary in connection with a lesson in geography or in some other subject, you will place a B in the appropriate column under Part I.

Consider the item has received attention even if only a few children have used it. If you use an item in more than one connection, you may use more than one letter in a column.

PART II of the directions asks you to tell whether the majority of the children in the grade in which you are teaching can at the present time use the item independently or whether you find it necessary to give direct instruction in it either in a drill period or in connection with some other subject. If the pupils use it independently, put an I in the column under Part II. If they need help, put an H in the same column.

<sup>1</sup>A teacher in the Kenwood School, Minneapolis.

## THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

Please fill out Part II for each item in the list if you have had occasion to use it in your grade at any time during the year.

## DIRECTIONS

PART I How has this item received attention in your classroom *in this past month*?

- A. As drill to learn how or as practice to develop skill
- B. In the course of studying other subjects
- C. In the course of writing or speaking to convey ideas better

D. To develop independent critical thinking

E. As part of a class project or activity

F. To enrich the child's experience or to develop appreciation

Part II Which situation is more prevalent at the grade level you teach?

I. Pupils use it independently

H. The teacher finds it necessary to suggest its use and give help in using it

## Part I (A, B, C, D, E, F,)

## Part II

Items Considered	1 Often	2 Sometimes	3 Not at all	I or H
1. Using reference sources				
a. Dictionary				
b. Encyclopedia				
c. Atlas				
d. Library				
e. Books				
f. Telephone directory				
2. Writing letters				
3. Organizing ideas				
4. Engaging in creative writing				
5. Giving reports				
6. Engaging in a group discussion				
7. Combining ideas from several sources				
8. Experiencing guest-host relationships				
9. Telephoning				
10. Carrying on a social conversation				
11. Listening to the radio				
12. Listening to reports				
13. Learning new words				
14. Giving directions orally				
15. Carrying out printed directions				
16. Carrying out oral directions				
17. Seeing a movie				
18. Making a play				
19. Reading a story or poem aloud				
20. Retelling a story				
21. Memorizing a poem				
22. Planning an exhibit				
23. Acting out a story or play heard over the radio				
24. Taking notes on some report or talk				
25. Making announcements				
26. Writing out rules or directions				

## Part I (A, B, C, D, E, F,)

## Part II

	1 Often	2 Sometimes	3 Not at all	I or H
27. Working in small groups				
28. Speaking or writing in complete sentences				
29. Pronouncing or enunciating correctly				
30. Using acceptable English				
31. Planning what to do next				
32. Using correct punctuation				
33. Planning for a class excursion				
34. Using parliamentary procedure				
35. Choosing a book or poem to read				
36. Reading a story for pleasure				
37. Finding the subject and predicate				
38. Reading for information				

Note—if you wish to make comments on any point you may use the back of this sheet.

Questionnaires were sent to each fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teacher in the Minneapolis Elementary Schools toward the end of the school year, 1945-46. The results represent returns from 60 teachers of the fourth grade, 56 teachers of the fifth grade, and 60 teachers of the sixth grade. This included a random and extensive sampling of pupils from all economic levels in all sections of the city and from 58 of the city's 71 elementary schools.

#### *Frequency of Consideration*

When the 43 items of the questionnaire are listed in the order of the frequency with which they are given attention, all of the top half are concerned with work-type aspects of language and reading except possibly writing letters or seeing a movie. All of the creative and appreciative aspects of reading and expression fall below the middle, engaging in creative writing being 32nd and acting out a story or play heard over the radio, 42nd.

Of the social uses of language, giving and hearing reports and engaging in group discussion appear in the top one-fourth; working in small groups, planning what to do next, using parliamentary procedure, and reading aloud occur near the median. All the rest, like giving directions, carrying on a social

conversation, experiencing guest-host relationships, and the like occur in the lowest one-third.

The item given most consideration in Grade Four was learning new words, in Grade Five was reading for information, in grade Six was giving reports, in all grades combined was reading for information.

#### *Nature of Approach*

The second problem under consideration was the nature of the approach to the development of skills. Were they taught

- A. As drill to learn how or as practice to develop skill
- B. In the course of studying other subjects
- C. In the course of writing or studying to convey ideas better
- D. To develop independent, critical thinking
- E. As part of a class project or activity
- F. To enrich the child's experience or to develop appreciation

Results indicate that Approach B, in which skills were given attention in the course of studying other subjects, was used in the greatest percent of the cases in every grade. The drill or isolated practice approach was used more often in the fourth grade than in

the other two. Approach E, giving attention to a skill as part of a class project or activity, ranked second in grades five and six, and third in grade four.

However, the low rank of Approach C, in which the skill was given attention in the course of writing or speaking to convey ideas better, and of Approach D, in which the main purpose was to develop independent, critical thinking, would indicate the lack of a conscious effort to think of these skills in relation to effective communication. Both of these approaches, however, are inherent in using skills in relationship to other subjects or projects; hence the frequency with which they were mentioned may indicate more attention to clarity of thinking and independence of attack upon skills than the teachers themselves were conscious of.

Results show that letter writing was most frequently taught by means of segregated drills in every grade. The only other item for which this was true was correct punctuation.

When results were studied separately for weak classes, evidence showed that on the whole teachers used about the same approach with underprivileged children as with average and superior classes, except for a tendency to use slightly more segregated drill. With the stronger groups the drill approach again predominates more in writing activities than in any others. There is evidence also that teachers of these pupils emphasize critical thinking more in connection with listening than at any other time.

### *Degree of Independence Exhibited by Pupils in Use of Skills*

Finally, evidence was gathered to determine to what degree the children were independent in the use of language skills. The number of skills which more than 60 per cent of the pupils use independently seems to be the same in grades four and five but increases very rapidly in grade six. It is significant that no skill which shows more than 60 per cent of independence in its use by pupils in any grade was mentioned as having been taught by the drill approach most frequently in that grade.

Nineteen skills were used independently by less than 40 per cent of the pupils in grade four, 18 in grade five, and 10 in grade six. Four of the skills which have a similarly low rating for independent use in every grade (items 7, 9, 15, 17) were also among those in which the drill approach was used most often.

When the per cent of independence developed through segregated drill is compared with that developed in the course of studying other subjects and with emphasis upon the enrichment of the child's experience or the development of appreciation, the superiority of the other approaches over the drill approach is evident, especially in grades five and six. This whole question of how best to develop in pupils independence in the use of language skills as effective tools of communication should be given further study through research.



# The Envelope Needs Teaching, Too

JOHN H. TREANOR<sup>1</sup>

The envelope of the friendly letter provides interesting material for the English program of the elementary school. In the work of teaching letters, the envelope sometimes is relegated to an indifferent place, with a corresponding loss of emphatic teaching. Since the entire letter-writing program ought to be motivated by practical opportunities including the use of the mail, a thorough teaching of the envelope cannot be overlooked. The following suggestions may, therefore, be useful to English teachers in the elementary school.

A series of interesting lessons on the envelope applicable to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades is not hard to devise—the purpose of the envelope, the significance of various imprints on it, and the form of address itself.

The first lesson in the series should concern itself with communication in general. The historical necessity of human intercourse, the contributions of science towards more rapid and more distant transmission of ideas, the inter-dependence of the modern world—all these must be broken down into satisfactory units of presentation.

The next lesson narrows the field of communication to the letter. At this point, innumerable types of lessons are possible, all centering about the post office service available throughout the world. The historical growth of the post office, from the human runner to the latest air-liner, the invention of postage with a nod in the direction of stamp collecting and its correlation with geography, the expanded services rendered by

the government postal department, how a post office operates—all these things, when presented to the class, broaden the experiences of boys and girls. Various forms and blanks are available at the post office, and, where possible, a teacher should arrange a class visit to the nearest station. It adds no small interest when pupils understand what happens after a letter is slipped into the mail-box.

In logical sequence the next series of lessons is concerned with the letter-form (which is taken for granted in this article).<sup>2</sup>

Finally there comes a study of the envelope itself. For this particular phase, the following lesson proved quite effective.

The teacher, by way of introducing the envelope form, gathered beforehand enough discarded examples from letters actually received. The pupils examined every piece of writing on the envelopes. The name of the addressee, the various parts of the address, and their necessity; the postmark and cancellation, with particular attention to the date and time of mailing; the return address, if any; the kind and position of the stamp; the various bits of propaganda which the government uses in the body of the cancellation—these things received careful observation and animated discussion.

Next the class, with the teacher's help, evolved the characteristic form of the superscription, with some attention to either the

<sup>1</sup>Master of the Francis Parkman School, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

<sup>2</sup>See the author's articles, "Courtesy Through Letter-Writing," *Elementary English Review*, April 1946; also "Letter-Writing in the Elementary School," *Journal of Education*, May, 1946.

block or the slant system of margin, and with sufficient emphasis on its position on the envelope.

Then came individual pupil application, blank envelopes being distributed to the class for the purpose. At this point the teacher was careful to demonstrate a simple device which, if followed, assured the proper place of the superscription. For it is only too well known that the most common error in writing the envelope is that of position—the superscription being generally placed too high, with the postal cancellation inevitably obscuring the first line. Hence the teacher instructed the pupils to turn the envelopes sideways, to measure from the top of the envelope (in reality its left side) a space of about an inch and equi-distant from either edge and at that point to make a dot as a guide for the beginning of the first line of the superscription. While the position of the dot is entirely arbitrary, experience shows that the handwriting of pupils requires much more space than, for example, a typewritten superscription; hence ample room must be provided.

The value of the device, however, lies in the fact that, if it is required, (no ruler is needed for so approximate a location) pupils

will have at their command a practical scheme for insuring correct position. The most casual examination of a batch of envelopes done even in the lowest grades will prove the worth of using this dot, and it can be made so lightly as not to spoil the appearance of the envelope. The first line having been correctly placed, no further difficulty need be anticipated for the other lines. Thus with a little attention at the beginning, the entire superscription can be done rapidly and correctly.

Because of the rather large penmanship of elementary pupils, the return address was placed upon the back of the envelope, where sufficient space is provided.

Before concluding the lesson, only one other consideration remained—to teach how to fold letters. Cheap arithmetic paper, as well as paper already used for other lessons, suggested an economy of material in this necessary instruction. For, simple as it seems to the experienced, the trick of folding an 8"x10" sheet to fit a small envelope is not readily understood by most pupils. Hence the teacher demonstrated how to do it, and gave the class sufficient opportunity to practice.

### A LESSON USING RADIO IN THE CLASSROOM

(Continued from page 294)

#### Books

- Gordon, Dorothy. *All Children Listen. A Radio House Book.* George W. Stewart. 1942. 67 West 44th Street, New York.
- Harrison, Margaret. *Radio in the Classroom.* New York. Prentice Hall, 1938.

- Herzberg, Max J. *Radio and English Teaching.* English Monograph No. 14, National Council of Teachers of English. Appleton—Century. 1941.
- Levenson, William B. *Teaching Through Radio.* New York. Farrar and Rinehart.

# Learning the Time Concept Through Historical Fiction

MARY B. DEATON<sup>1</sup>

When Alice in her wonderland emerged with the duck, the dodo, and other creatures from her pool of tears, the mouse offered to dry them by reciting English history, which, he said, "is the driest thing I know." His plan failed, but some there may be who suspect that had he adhered strictly to *dates* in history the drying process might have been facilitated. Perhaps, however, the mouse was like those "who just can't remember dates." They do remember.

In fourteen hundred and ninety-two  
Columbus sailed the ocean blue,

and know that Paul Revere's ride occurred on *the eighteenth of April in seventy-five because hardly a man is now alive who remembers that famous day and year*. For the most part, however, they read right through and over dates with the ruthlessness of a steam roller. Whatever the philosophers and mathematicians hold about a finite number of points and instants in space and time, historians are still prone to include dates as a part of their fictions. And authorities still agree that establishing a time concept in the child's mind constitutes one of the most difficult teaching problems.

Tests given to college freshman and sophomores show that a time concept is not being mastered with too great efficiency. College classes in children's literature are interested (when the subject is called to their attention) in becoming aware of dates and in studying the techniques and devices which writers of historical fiction employ to call attention to the time setting of a story. Perhaps children may also be led to a greater awareness of time

backgrounds by discovering how writers of fiction introduce dates, some in a straightforward manner as if to get the matter over with, and others by hook and by crook, and cleverly so.

Historical fiction is available for all age and grade levels, beginning with intermediate grades. Whether all children in a given class read the same book or whether each reads a different book, a little directed reading toward discovering how an author tells when his story happened may help lead to an awareness of *time*.

The dating may be very specific and forthright as in Miss Elizabeth Gale's *Katrina Van Ost and the Silver Rose*:

It was early in the afternoon one day in February in the year of our Lord 1638. The crooked streets of Middleburg, in the province of Zeeland, were white with newly fallen snow.

The directness may be no less forthright, but with a device such as that used by Miss Janet Gray in the opening of her *Meggy MacIntosh*:

'Edinburg, Jan. 5, 1775. It is melancholy,' wrote Meggy MacIntosh, 'to be fifteen and poor and homely in close proximity to a cousin who is eighteen and rich and beautiful.'

Letters, wills, and other documents are similarly used for giving dates. *Out of the Flame* by Miss Eloise Lownsbury contains a herald's proclamation at the opening of the story and from that we learn the setting in time:

<sup>1</sup>Superior, Wisconsin.

The very stones of the old courtyard of Blois echoed with the jubilant trumpet calls of two heralds in scarlet and gold.

'In the name of the King!' they chanted. 'this glad day of Saint Martin in the year of Grace 1529, Francois I, King of France, proclaims a three-day tournament in honor of the liberation of the princes Francois and Henri! The tourney of the knights will be interspersed with competitive games and tilting among the court pages.'

Many readers, grown-up or juvenile, are only vaguely aware of the presence or significance of dates in contexts such as those above. By informal comment such as, "I wonder what was happening in America about that time?" a teacher may help the child tag the dates. She will find Helen Dean Fish's *Pegs of History* helpful here too. The working out of picture charts such as those in *George Washington's World* by Genevieve Foster ought to prove stimulating. For her own guidance in this type of problem she will find *Who Was When?* by Miss Miriam Allen de Ford an ever present help in time of need.

The dating may be less specific and not cited in the first pages of a story, yet neatly tucked in. If the date is not so obviously mentioned as in the above passages, the reader will have to be taught to be watchful for such references as that in *Away Goes Sally* by Miss Elizabeth Coatsworth:

As Sally drove home she saw old Captain Dagget in one of the fields, his hair powdered in a queue, and his gun lying beside him under the fence. He waved at her and she waved back. He had fought in the Revolution, and the years of hardship and bloodshed had turned him a little queer so that he still thought the redcoats might be coming down the road.

Miss Ruth Holbrook's *The Patchwork Quilt*, for young readers, has sufficient and accurate local color so that an adult reader may approximately identify the time even before President Grant appears on the scene. For the child, however, the date is emphasized in the very last sentence:

And to this day Grandmother, who was little Katy then, has that same crazy quilt. Now it has a big satin patch in one corner on which is embroidered, 'The fire of 1868.'

Many authors work the date of the setting into conversation early in the story. A few examples of what the youthful reader may be trained to look for are sufficient to illustrate. The first is from Miss Elizabeth Gale's *Seven Beads of Wampum*:

'Father,' she asked suddenly, 'What did you write on the frosted window-pane just before you came to breakfast?'

Willem van Burg smiled down at his child.

'I wrote, sixteen-twenty-eight' he told her. 'That is the number of this year.'

'Has everything a number, Father?'

'Almost everything.'

'Have I?'

'Yes. Your number is four. You are four years old, but soon you will have a birthday, and then your number will be five.'

'And you?'

'I am twenty-six.' . . .

'Father, while I was in the kitchen this morning, a boy came in with a basket of eggs. When he put the eggs out on the table, he called their numbers—one, two, three,—like that. The eggs were all alike. How did he know which was one and which was three?'

In *With Sword and Song* by Melrich Rosenberg the boys in the story are being



instructed in horsemanship and the use of the lance. Their instructor is not pleased with their performance:

'Andre!'

'Yes, my lord, sir.'

'Say either my lord, or sir. You talk like a cringing serf.'

'Yes, my lord.'

'How old are you?'

'Fifteen on the Feast of the Trinity, sir. I was born in 1168.'

'And you, Gervase, how old are you?'

'Sixteen on St. Martial's day just passed, sir.'

Claud raised his thick wand and poked it upward into Andre's face, 'And you don't even know how to get astride a horse.'

*Vermilion Clay* by Mrs. Florence Taylor reveals the date and the locale of the story in the following paragraphs:

The Grigsby family was coming into the Illinois country where Mr. Grigsby was to take over one of the salt licks along Vermilion River. He had obtained the lease for it from the government and had been traveling from Marietta, Ohio, for many days now. Elizabeth managed to extricate herself from the kettles and barrels and crept to the front of the wagon. 'Why, it's snowing!' she cried. 'March is going out like a lion, isn't it?'

'Yes, child, March 31, 1802, is giving us one of those prairie blizzards we've heard so much about back East.'

Although someone has said he learned all he knew of English history from Shakespeare—and made no apology for gaps in his knowledge—no claim is made here for more than a pleasant approach to the problem of teaching children to become aware of dates. Approaching the door is certainly not entering it, but, whatever time is, doors are finite, and approach precedes entrance.

The following books are quoted or referred to:

Elizabeth Gale, *Katrina Van Ost and the Silver Rose*, Putnam, 1934.

Janet Gray, *Meggy MacIntosh*, Doubleday Doran, 1934.

Eloise Lownsbury, *Out of the Flame*, Longmans, Green, 1931.

Elizabeth Coatsworth, *Away Goes Sally*, Macmillan, 1935.

Ruth Holbrook, *The Patchwork Quilt*, Doubleday Doran, 1940.

Elizabeth Gale, *Seven Beads of Wampum*, G. P. Putnam's, 1936.

Melrich V. Rosenberg, *With Sword and Song*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1937.

Florence Taylor, *Vermilion Clay*, Albert Whitman, 1937.

Helen Dean Fish, *Pegs of History*, Frederick A. Stokes, 1943.

Miriam Allen de Ford, *Who Was When?*, H. W. Wilson Co.

Genevieve Foster, *George Washington's World*, Charles Scribners.

# Poetry Potential

LINDA CLEORA SMITH<sup>1</sup>

Every school child has some capacity for appreciation of the aesthetic. In the presence of beauty most children summon a delicacy of expression that in itself has charm. But this charm was first felt by the child and then expressed. In his capacity to feel and to express in words is the child's potential ability to write poetry.

It has been the author's classroom experience that sometimes a setting presents itself unsummoned and that again a setting and a mood can be created—a mood conducive to joy in poetical expression: a mood which often can be caught by every child in a given group.

## *Why Bother to Create A Mood*

People are not made to feel like writing poetry by hearing a decree that they shall write poetry. Who has not had the experience of being suddenly confronted with a topic boldly chalked on the board and with being told to produce within a certain few minutes a story, an essay, or, perhaps it was a poem: and it must be on that designated topic? And who does not recall the feeling of utter inadequacy when he discovered the topic to be one utterly foreign, not only to his mood, but also to his entire world of experience?

As a high school junior the author was once told, with no time for forethought, to imagine that she was one of a group of men sitting around the stove in a country store swapping yarns. She was to write the story which she would tell on such an occasion. Notwithstanding that composition was at that time her favorite subject, the author will never forget the chagrin caused by this predicament. The assignment was fulfilled but with utter lack of confidence that her story was in any detail true to life, or convincing.

No child should ever be forced to write when he has nothing to write. As for poetry, no child should ever be forced to write poetry. But most children can be delightfully led to have an urge to write it.

This urge may be brought about in any one of several ways. It may be by the reading of poetry written by others. It may be by listening to the song of a bird, by watching fleecy white clouds against the blue, by feeling rain on an upturned face, or by remembering the snug feeling of being tucked into bed.

The teacher may deliberately create a spirit which is contagious by throwing out a catchy line, with a challenge for the children to add a line, and thus a poem starts and others follow, some by the class and others by individuals.

Again, in a bit of prose, distinct rhythm is apparent and, with a little revamping, a bit of poetry emerges and the child has made a beginning. If the revamping is done by the group, both the originator and the group are inspired to further attempts.

A teacher who learns to recognize or to create situations and to utilize them toward the needed mood for creative writing may develop a technique which can be effectively used with any age group.

It is not uncommon for the author to have an adult observer come to her at the close of a poetry period with fourth or fifth graders and say, "Look, I just had to write a poem too!" On one such occasion the poem thus written was strongly suggestive of Carl Sandburg's "Chicago." During this period most of the group had been writing of the Israelites in Egypt, of their oppression, of their desire for a return to the homeland. But the adult ex-

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pression of workers in an industrial city fraught with heat, fatigue and discouragement was a product of the same stimulus.

#### *A Word for the Prosaic Child*

If there be a child who is extremely prosaic, still there may be much of beauty in the thoughts he expresses, and perhaps they will savor of the spirit of poetry. He may thoroughly enjoy what others have written. It is important that whatever his efforts may be, they be appreciated for all that is good in them. The creation of poetry cannot be forced. The love of it can all too easily be deadened.

#### *Keeping the Atmosphere Free from Intrusion*

Particularly when the poems are being written individually by the children, it is important that quiet be observed. The audible mention of a word may change the trend of thought of a listener or influence the product of one who wishes to express only his own thoughts. To the end that this silence may be not strained, but natural, the following suggestions may be a help.

Materials should be available to all in advance. This should include a small slip of paper for helping in spelling. In this lesson, as in all written lessons, a spelling conscience may be strengthened. The child may be led to feel that help is available when needed: That he does not put on his paper words which he

does not know are correctly spelled. When in doubt he writes the word as he thinks it should be, on his slip of paper, and by raising his hand, indicates to the teacher that he needs it checked. She writes the correct spelling if necessary. This procedure becomes such a habit that it need not interfere particularly with the flow of words. In case the teacher is not immediately available a blank space may be left for a time until the word has been checked. This checking is done with a minimum of talking.

#### *Stimulus and Response*

There are so many ways of stimulating children to attempt poetry that every lesson becomes a unique experience and takes on a character all its own. During the last several years the author has made varied approaches. She feels that to be successful any approach must have in it spontaneity, and beauty, and something in the spirit of the situation that is felt and flows forth in expression because the writer has an urge from within.

In poetic writing as in reverie, one lead can carry us far adrift. Hence though we set the mood, each individual will travel on his own wings of thought. The direction and limitations of his flight will be determined by his own experiences and interpretations. The initial impression is a starting point colored by a background all his own. His thoughts, his emotions, his urges find an outlet. He writes.

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# Children's Autobiographies

RALPH C. PRESTON<sup>1</sup>

A steadily increasing number of elementary schools provide children with the experience of writing autobiographical sketches. Few creative literary undertakings hold so much potential interest, yet inspection of the products makes it clear that the reverse is often the case. A recent survey showed that one child author after another merely skimmed the surface of his life, dealing with it on a routine, descriptive level. It is all too evident that the preparation of many autobiographies is considered just one more perfunctory task.

Aside from the absence of spontaneity in their preparation, their use by teachers is often similarly offhand. Emphasis often tends to be directed toward technical aspects of language rather than content. Their possibilities as sources of valuable information about children and as leads for guidance are easily ignored.

This article will offer suggestions with respect to two questions. (a) How can the idea of writing autobiographies be presented to children so that the experience is lifted above the prosaic? (b) How may autobiographies be used so that they deepen a teacher's insight into the personalities of the children who wrote them and furnish a basis for guidance?

## *Stimulating Children to Prepare Vital Autobiographies*

1. *Acquaint children with published autobiographies.* Reading selections from half a dozen candid, interpretative autobiographies builds initial familiarity with this form of literature. Joint reading and discussion of appropriate passages and chapters from an author's account of his own life may be an exhilarating group experience. Restricting the readings to childhood scenes will insure its maintenance at the level of the child's understanding. Books which have been successfully

used in this way include *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, *The Story of My Boyhood and Youth* by John Muir, *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller, *Tramping on Life* by Harry Kemp, and *Jews Without Money* by Michael Gold. These are accounts of individuals with a robust quality to their lives and have a wide appeal among children. The total effect of their reading is an appreciation of the autobiographical form for communicating personal reminiscences. A background is thus provided for the children's own autobiographies, lending to their efforts a sense of importance and dignity.

2. *Suggest that children limit the scope of their autobiographies.* The immensity and diversity of experiences, even in the relatively brief life of a child, cause a stumbling block to many children as they sit down to record their personal histories. The array of recollections jumbled in their memories is bewildering. The apparent difficulty of organizing them leads certain children to curtail their stories rather sharply. Others begin to ramble, then become dissatisfied with their progress because the pattern does not emerge as desired. Such frustration may be avoided and the task trimmed to fit the powers of children by proposing that the data be limited to their experiences in school, or to their family experiences, or to some other restricted area of childhood. The practice of furnishing children with an outline of topics to be covered, however, is of dubious value. It has a tendency to force the content into a preconceived mold with the result that the final product conceals rather than reveals the child's spontaneous emphasis and distribution of remembered detail.

<sup>1</sup>University of Pennsylvania.

3. *Assure children that autobiographies will be treated confidentially.* It is assumed that autobiographies will not be attempted unless a teacher has the confidence of his class and that rapport exists between teacher and children. Where this is not the case, the task is stilted and scarcely worth the effort. A child who feels insecure with his teacher almost always circumvents the objective through flattery, prevarication, or other manner of withholding the real facts. Unless an autobiography is sincere, reflective, and candid, its writing cannot be regarded as a significant experience.

Its privacy should also be assured. A child should know that his exposition will not be read by his former teachers, his parents, or his classmates without his permission. Although the extraverts of a class may think nothing of reading aloud their most intimate experiences and reflections, the more sensitive, reserved members require a guarantee of privacy. Without it, their writing will almost surely be on a shallow plane.

### *Using Autobiographies as Instruments of Guidance*

A sincere autobiography reveals its author's outlook and preoccupations. It can be authentically interpreted through judging how consistently it dovetails with data about the child which has been secured through other sources.

1. *Discovering irritants.* Through the autobiography, teachers may discover children's sensitive spots and situations which are irritants and sources of resentment. The following excerpts from sixth grade children's autobiographies are illustrative.

"I passed through first, second, third grade somehow. One thing that got me mad was that every teacher tried to change me from writing DARK to light when dark is my natural writing (And they still do)."

"In fifth grade all of the boys mad(e) fun of me. They always were saying I was fat, but I can't help it if I'm fat."

2. *Discovering what children regard as objectionable traits in teachers.* Guidance is effected not only through manipulating and enriching the environment, but also through awareness on the part of the teacher of the insensitivities of teachers which children have bitterly remembered and reported. The following quotations are from the same set of autobiographies.

"In first grade there is one thing that stands out in my mind. The class used to sit around in a circle and each one of us would read a paragraph. I remember once the teacher skipped me and I was so upset because the chance to read was the thrill of the day."

"When I first saw the first grade room I thought it looked more like a jail than a school room, with all the tables in perfect rows facing each other."

"I was in second grade and I had a teacher called Mrs. X. I remember how she used to yell at the children. There were two colored children she used to pick on. That's all I remember about second grade."

"In third grade I never got to choose my best friend to be in my group at a work table."

"In fifth grade I had Mrs. Y. I remember she used to teach us about South America. Everybody came to know South America so well. The reason she taught us about South America was because her husband was there and she had visited there. I always wondered why we didn't learn something about North America."

"From ever since I was a little kid I can remember Miss Z (the principal) talking away."



# "Land Where the Pilgrims Pried"

WM. M. LAMERS<sup>1</sup>

About four years ago I began my investigations into verbalism in the interpretation of the symbols of American Democracy. After carrying on at random for a couple of weeks I suspended operations and threw away my incomplete findings with the thought that teachers then had enough to worry them, what with stamp and bond sales, button collections, afghan squares knitting, keys for nickel drives—or what have you? I was afraid, too, that weakened with blood donation and exhausted with rationing, rationing book issuance, draft registration, they might lack both the strength and patience to take it. But now the troublesome truth can be out, and here it is: A lot of children apparently don't have much of an idea as to what some of the verbal symbols of democracy mean. And at least one teacher suffers from some kind of uncharitable judgment on the Pilgrim fathers for her class sang, "Land where the Pilgrims pried." Then when I asked them to repeat the first stanza I listened carefully. Either she had taught them the amended version or they had taught her. She also sang, "Land where the Pilgrims pried." I still wonder what they thought the song meant—or she.

The bulk of my inquiry into verbalism, however, was not concerned with *America*, but with the pledge to the flag. Going into a classroom I would say, "Do you boys and girls know how to pledge allegiance to the flag?" And bless their hearts, and the good teacher's too, they demonstrated their beautiful skill with gusto. Next I would ask them en masse if they knew what the pledge meant. And with glowing eyes to a child they would tell me yes. Finally I would go to the individ-

ual harder words such as "pledge," "allegiance," "republic," "indivisible," "liberty," "justice," and ask them to come up one by one to whisper meanings into my ear—quietly of course.

I took down the answers, which long ago I consigned to the wastebasket. As I remember them they were quite uniformly remarkable. Ask any child up to and including the sixth what "indivisible" means when used in the pledge, and the chances are four out of five that he will tell you off hand that "it can't be seen." One little miss in the fourth grade said it meant "the electric man," whatever that is. I learned that justice was "the government" (*O utinam*); the "F.B.I."; and—from a little girl—"crime"! Here the concatenation of ideas was apparent. What more natural progression of thought could there be than from justice, to the Department of Justice, to the people it pursued, to the life they led and the deeds they did.

I did not, however, confine my inquiries to the pledge of allegiance. Sometimes I asked questions concerning *America*, or the *Star Spangled Banner*. The former is relatively simple except for a few inversions and repetitions and yet ask the average adult, not a teacher, to paraphrase it in his own language. I am here not even suggesting that it be related to living as in the experience curriculum in literature. That, I submit, is another and very necessary matter. As for the national anthem, if, as alleged, it is somewhat unsingable for most people, it is also rather not understandable, particularly the first stanza. I know. I asked people to explain it.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant superintendent, Milwaukee Public Schools.

But enough concerning the misconceptions arising out of verbalism in the patriotic formulas. If you have any doubt that they exist in the quantity or quality suggested experiment on the next class you deal with.

Of course it may be objected that suddenly to confront a child or a group, for that matter, with a question of definition does not permit reflective thinking; that the making of a definition is an exceedingly difficult procedure even for many adults; that our power of understanding is normally greater than our power of defining, particularly for abstract words; that the capacity to spout definitions like a dictionary is in itself no guarantee of understanding; that we have many ideas as totalities of language which we cannot analyze; that it is better to live by a vaguely conceived pledge of allegiance than not to live by it even with understanding.

My friend the music expert, moreover, tells me that it isn't necessary that people who sing must have any clear idea concerning what they are singing. "Song is the language of the heart and not of the head," he says. Maybe I got my rather contrary ideas in the matter from a sign which hung in the studio of my vocal maestro. It was a declaration of the credo of some kind of voice teachers association. I can remember only the first item, to wit, "We sing not notes but ideas." No, says my musical guide, not words, notes; not ideas, feelings. If the boys and girls respond with some kind of vague feelings of affection toward the country, an inner mistiness of purpose to lick anybody who insults our emblems, a sense of unity with brothers in benevolence under the bunting, then all is well, education for patriotism is performed, and the republic is secure.

All of which I gravely doubt. I think words are intended to carry meanings. And while not all meanings must be understood

with identical clarity of detail, all other things being equal, the intellectual basis of that complexus of understandings, appreciations, ideals, habits, which we call patriotism in action, grows in strength as it grows in peoples' perceptions. I can't somehow or other feel that the little girl who confuses justice with crime would not be a better citizen for a few changed ideas.

And mind you, I am not accusing anyone of doing a slipshod job. There are many good reasons why the schools do not always *teach* this material. For one thing traditionally it has been memorized and not taught! For another, understandings are likely to be taken for granted. Again in a high division of labor every teacher is inclined to assume that someone else will do the job. Nor is this sort of thing likely to be tested in an examination.

All common formulas run the same risk. Prayers and hymns for example—how often do we trouble to explain them, or even to teach the words to children, and as a result what happens? A friend of mine tells me that for years she sang, "Protect our eggs of children" until her horrified mother's ear at length detected the amazing substitution for "Protect thy exiled children." In my own infant case rebelliously I rendered "sinful and sorrowful" as "simple and sorrowful." I say "rebelliously" because there lived in our neighborhood an unfortunate whom my great grandmother characterized as "simple." I am not so sure about it now but as a child I knew that even in the superior eyes of heaven I wasn't like *that*.

My recommendation then for the teaching of the verbal symbols of patriotism is twofold: 1. Be certain that the learners get the words straight; 2. Be certain that they get proper meanings out of the words.

—Oh but you can't teach second graders difficult words and equally difficult ideas such

as "allegiance" and "indivisible," said a young teacher to me.

Can't you? You can teach them what allegiance is if they are old enough to understand what takes place when a dog fights to protect its young master, or when a mother bird dies trying to save her young from a hawk. The concept of divisibility doesn't have to wait upon the development of the theory of numbers. But work the problem

out for yourselves and for them. It is the basic rhetorical and pedagogical problem of adjusting to what was yesterday called the apperceptive mass. It is the superlative test of the resourceful teacher.

And, as for the "Land where the Pilgrims pried"—I still wonder what it means. It bothers me. Maybe there is something in history that I unfortunately missed.

### CHILDREN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

(Continued from page 307)

"In fifth grade I was in Mrs. A's class. At times she was awfully nice, and at other times she made ya cringe like a dog."

3. *Discovering traits and procedures to which children respond positively.* Needless to say, the teacher who reads through a set of autobiographies will get positive as well as negative clues concerning the qualities a child seeks in his teacher.

"My best recollections were when I came into Miss B's second grade. She was very kind to me, and helped me with my work. Strangely enough, I remember more about the second grade, than I do about the third grade."

"Miss C was one of the best teachers I've ever known. We did such handicrafts as batik, block print (I was a specialist at this), tying and dyeing, and lots of woodwork."

4. *Discovering children's needs for encouragement and help.* It is well known that

children's ideas tend to outrun their skill. It is significant that unfinished tasks and failures are mentioned in a large number of the sketches.

"I started to make a puppet in Miss L's class but I never finished it."

"Our art teacher asked who wanted to do what. I chose wood work and tried to make a table but failed."

### Conclusion

Personality traits are rather faithfully mirrored in children's autobiographies. There are those children who record nothing but incidents built around friendships and cliques. Others summarize their school years as a succession of teacher personalities. Still others string together remembered plays, trips, and other activities. It is, of course, possible to read too much into children's autobiographies. They are, nevertheless, tremendously fruitful documents. They will reward painstaking attention to the technique of improving their quality.

# A Daily Class Newspaper

ALMA HEINEMAN<sup>1</sup>

The article by A. N. Bergfeld on "A Creative Writing Project," appearing in the April *Elementary English Review*, stimulated a teacher of twelve year-olds to start a daily newspaper. It would give many opportunities for creative writing and also be fun.

The newspaper was named, "The Sixth Grade Daily Herald," for it heralded the news of the following day. Two classes were vitally interested. A half hour was given each day from each class to the lay-out of the paper. The lay-out was on a form similar to the front page of a city daily newspaper, but drawn in chalk on the blackboard. Spaces were left for articles, headlines and details.

Definite guidance was given to assist in the choosing of the topics and daily headlines. These topics covered (1) special school events, (2) beautiful thoughts, found in reading, (3) original poetry, (4) humorous stories, (5) coming events, (6) short book reviews, (7) test assignments, (8) messages to parents and (9) sports events.

The three main articles were sketched on the blackboard as co-operative compositions, specializing in (a) main topic of the day, (b)

a humorous incident, and (c) a current event. The story was rewritten immediately on the blackboard lay-out. The headline was composed at the completion of the article. The supplementary articles were written by individual volunteers. The entire newspaper was then recopied on a theme paper, for this was the final form. It was always placed in the most conspicuous place on the "Pin-up Bulletin Board."

As soon as one day's copy was erased from the board, the layout was made for the next day's edition.

The humorous articles were the most difficult to write. The pupils enjoyed the fun of regrouping words and thoughts to make puns and jolly expressions. Many slower members of the class added terse wit. The acceptance by the class of their phrases resulted in a fine social spirit.

The daily newspaper gave unlimited opportunities to children of many types of intellect. It stimulated fun and good humor. It made the children alert for news. It created interest in reading the daily paper, including more features than just the funnies.

<sup>1</sup>A teacher in the Kennedy School, Cincinnati, Ohio.

# Enjoying New Books With Children

CLARA WILSON

AND

CLARA EVANS<sup>1</sup>

Today as never before there is a wealth of books for all children. There are two interesting developments in the current literature for young people. One is the bringing out of old books in a new dress, so the physical book is pleasing and satisfying to the child and therefore likely to hold his interest and attention. A case in point is Friskey and Evans' *Chicken Little Count to Ten*, published by the Children's Press. Here we have an old story dressed up with charming illustrations so that even the most sedate adult would laugh at the chicken falling down, struck by a drop of rain. A second characteristic of present-day juvenile books is the attention which is being given to the illustration and the make-up and format of the book itself so that the final product, born of the combined efforts of author, illustrator and publisher, is a very attractive book indeed. Good examples of this development are *The Rooster Crows*, by Maude and Miska Petersham (Oxford Press) and *Prayer for a Child*, illustrated by Elizabeth Jones (Macmillan Company). Each page is artistically designed. Or, to cite another such book, as a child hears and sees *Here Comes Daddy*, by Winifred Milius (Young Scott Publishers), he sees his own daddy coming home, for almost all fathers are pictured. All these lovely new creations are waiting to be shared with little children.

The first problem of those who teach little children is how to select from the wealth of the writings that come out each year. A large measure of the success of the storyteller depends on her selection of stories, her power to discriminate, and her growing ability to

evaluate. But there is more to a selection of stories than this. Every teacher knows that there are some stories meant for her to tell. Her richness of living, her power of appreciation, her background of cultural experience make her attune with a certain author and his story, and it meets with such success that the children love the story and ask for it again and again. Of course, the teacher must recognize the literary merit of the selection and be quick to see that the author has a sympathetic understanding of children. The teacher of child literature wants to build in her children the ability to make choices for themselves.

Story-time in any schoolroom, home or library, can be the high point of the day. There are certain routine details that help children to achieve greater enjoyment. They should be grouped about the teacher or parent on comfortable chairs, far enough apart to be at ease, yet near enough for every child to see the illustrations in the book. The teacher should never have more than twenty-five listeners so that her voice is heard but yet can be soft and well modulated. Each story-time should involve only one story. This should be an occasion, a special event, even a surprise now and then, the time waited-for all day. The teacher sits down with her children; all are comfortable and all enjoy this time. She is relaxed and so are the children. Care should be taken that the light is suitable. By way of introduction the teacher shows the book, first the front cover page if it is beautifully illus-

<sup>1</sup>Chairman of the Department of Elementary Education, and Assistant Professor of Elementary Education, respectively, in Teachers College, the University of Nebraska.



trated as so many are today, e. g. *Farm Stories*, by K. and B. Jackson (published by Simon and Schuster). Lois Lenski's *Strawberry Girl* is excellent for this purpose too, for each unit of the story or page has a lovely illustration to show the little folks. Some teachers may prefer to tell the story through and then show the pictures. Varying the method adds to the children's interest. Be sure to hold the book on the level of the child's eye.

Stories for the young children should be read again and again. Children get just a little at each reading. All children want to be read to. With the school child, literary interest is at least two grade levels above his ability to read. There is some research to indicate that reading ability is improved by a story period each day.

In books for the more mature child of eight or nine attention should be called to the names of the author and the illustrator. Interesting happenings in their lives can be told these children.

As stories are read or told again and again, lines that repeat or say it again can be pointed out. Sometimes vivid descriptions can be read,

as in *Farm Stories*, *Little Jack Rabbit*, and the *Big Shiny Eyes*.

Occasionally even colorful words can be repeated. They become part of the children's vocabulary.

Another very good use of stories or poetry can be made during rest time in Nursery School, Kindergarten or the Lower School. Some poems seem to be written just to relax children, as *Good Night*, by Margaret Brown (William Scott).

When the story period is closed, it should be a finished period, leaving a good feeling. Often the pictures may be shown again or favorite parts repeated. It goes without saying that children should be taught some books are too expensive for small hands. Such volumes must be looked at and enjoyed with adult supervision. Some others are children's books, and the pages may be turned by inexperienced little fingers. All books should be kept on low shelves when not in use. They should never be torn for they are prized possessions.

The reward for the labor of choosing and the preparation for telling stories comes when eager little children say, "Tell it again, teacher!"

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# Program

## THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Convention Hall, Atlantic City, New Jersey

November 28, 29, 30, 1946

Convention Theme: "English for These Times"

### *Partial Program*

(Pre-Convention Sessions of the Commission on the English Curriculum Wednesday Morning and afternoon, November 27)

(Pre-Convention Meeting of the Executive Committee, Wednesday, November 27, 7:00—10:00 P. M.)

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Meeting of the Executive Committee, 9:00—12:00 A. M.

Meeting of the Board of Directors, 2:30-5:30 P. M.

(All members of the Council are invited to attend this meeting)

### GENERAL SESSION, 8:00-10:00 P. M.

*Presiding*, Ward H. Green, Tulsa, Oklahoma, First Vice-President of the Council.  
*Greetings—*

President's Address: English for these Times—Some Issues and Implications—Helene W. Hartley, Syracuse University (30 min.)

Implications of Modern Linguistic Science—Charles C. Fries, University of Michigan (30 min.)

It Is Earlier Than You Think—Theodore Morrison, Harvard University (30 min.)

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29

### GENERAL SESSION, 9:30-11:30 A. M.

*Presiding*, Harry A. Dominovich, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia, Second Vice-President of the Council.

Maximum Essentials in Composition—Porter G. Perrin, Colgate University (30 min.)

Critical Thinking through Instruction in English—Harold A. Anderson, University of Chicago (30 min.)

The Commission on the English Curriculum—Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota, Director of the Commission (30 min.)

### LUNCHEON SESSION, 12:00-1:45 P. M.

#### 1. *Books-for-Children: A Luncheon for Librarians and Elementary and Junior-High-School Teachers*

Committee: Lucy A. Lord, Massachusetts Avenue, Atlantic City, New Jersey; Dorothy J. Ferebee, Bronxville Elementary School, Bronxville, New York; Helen MacIntosh, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.; Letty VanDerveer, Public Library, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

*Presiding,*

Address—Frances Clarke Sayers, Superintendent of Work with Children, New York Public Library.

Authors of books for children will be seated conveniently to meet teachers and librarians who attend and to discuss children's literature informally with them. A souvenir program bearing the list of authors present and the titles of their books will be distributed to luncheon guests. Books of the authors will be on display at the booth of Children's Books Service in the Convention Hall.

(Tickets, probably to cost \$2.75, on sale at the Registration Desk.)

2. *Committee on Articulation*: An open meeting of the Committee to which are invited all who wish to discuss the subject of continuity in language growth through the various levels of education.

*Presiding*, Amanda M. Ellis, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Chairman, Committee on Articulation.

(Tickets, probably to cost \$2.75, on sale at the Registration Desk.)

3. NAJD luncheon meeting for all publications advisers

*Presiding*, Margaret Blair, Regional Director of NAJD for the Atlantic Region, Wilmerding, Pennsylvania.

Donald C. Wolfe, State Director of NAJD for New Jersey, Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

#### FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONFERENCES, 2:00-4:00 P. M.

##### 1. *For One World: Removing Barriers through English Teaching*

*Presiding*, John J. DeBoer, Roosevelt College, Chicago; Editor, *Elementary English Review*.

*Secretary*, Anne Bailey, Battin High School, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Your Student and the Atomic Enigma—Philip E. Kennedy, Senior High School, Oak Ridge, Tennessee (20 min.)

A Course in Internationalism for Senior High School—Robert U. Jameson, Haverford School, Haverford, Pennsylvania (10 min.)

A Course in Internationalism for Junior College—Mrs. N. V. Lindsay, Hillyer Junior College, Hartford, Connecticut (10 min.)

A High School Project in Understanding—M. David Hoffman, Simon Gratz High School, Philadelphia (10 min.)

A Latin-American Club in High School—Nora B. Thompson, Lower Merion High School, Ardmore, Pennsylvania (10 min.)

The Orient in the Classroom—Elizabeth Seeger, Dalton School, New York City (10 min.)

Soviet Russia with Elementary Classes—Lenore McCullough, Thaddeus Stevens School, Philadelphia (10 min.)

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

## 2. *For One Nation: Help through English Teaching*

*Presiding*, Merrill P. Pain, Director of English, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

*Secretary*, Sister Mary Claretta, O. S. F., St. Hubert's High School for Girls, Philadelphia.

Building One Nation through Children's Books—Charlemae Rollins, C. Hall Branch, Chicago Public Library (20 min.)

One Freshman, One Class, One Nation—Elsa Chapin, Packer Collegiate Institute, Brooklyn, New York (20 min.)

Understanding through College English—Wilfred Eberhart, Ohio State University (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Martin L. Gill, Ralnor High School, Wayne, Pennsylvania; Theodore Roosevelt Junior High School, New York City.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

## 3. *Improving Communication through Writing*

*Presiding*, Wesley Wiksell, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri.

*Secretary*, Eleanor Maurer, Hillside High School, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Writing in the Elementary Classes—Anne L. Worrell, Illman—Carter Unit, University of Pennsylvania (20 min.)

High School Composition—Maxwell Nurnberg, Abraham Lincoln High School, New York City (20 min.)

The Rating of Composition for College Entrance—Edward S. Noyes, Yale University, Chairman of the College Entrance Examination Board (30 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Mrs. Henrietta Tomlinson, Principal, Stow Creek Township School, Cumberland County, New Jersey; Rudolf Flesch, Author of *The Art of Plain Talk*; Maude Staudenmayer, Juneau High School, Milwaukee, President, National Association of Journalism Directors of Secondary Schools.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

## 4. *Improving Communication through Ability to Read* (High-School and College Section)

*Presiding*, William S. Gray, University of Chicago, Chairman of the Council Committee on Reading.

*Secretary*, Paul R. Sweitzer, Manhasset High School, Manhasset, New York.

Developmental Reading in Junior High School—Wilburt R. Walters, William Penn Charter School, Philadelphia (20 min.)

Reading Procedures in Senior High School—Rosemary M. Green, Curriculum Office, Board of Education, Philadelphia (20 min.)

How the English Teacher Can Help the Retarded Reader—Ralph C. Preston, University of Pennsylvania (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Bertha Handlan, University of Colorado; Charles R. Morris, Milton Academy, Milton, Massachusetts; Eason Monroe, Pennsylvania State College.

Question and Comment from the floor (30 min.)

5. *Improving Communication through Ability to Read*  
(Elementary School Section)

*Presiding*, Marjorie Hardy, Past President, Association for Childhood Education.

*Secretary*, Martha Walklett, Gibbsborough School, Gibbsborough, New Jersey.

The Place of the Classroom Teacher in Reading Adjustments—Helen Blair Sullivan, Boston University (20 min.)

Corrective and Remedial Cases: Diagnosis and Procedure—Emmett A. Betts, Temple University (20 min.)

Reading with a Purpose: A Classroom Picture—Mildred March, Principal, John Ward School, Newton, Massachusetts (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Lillian C. Paukner, Elementary Curriculum Supervisor, Milwaukee; John P. Milligan, Superintendent of Schools, Glen Ridge, New Jersey; Eloise Cason, Director of Clinical Reading, Bloomfield, New Jersey.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

6. *Language Study and Communication*

*Presiding*, Thomas C. Pollock, New York University.

*Secretary*, Edith Fletcher, Rutherford High School, Rutherford, New Jersey.

Language Study in the Elementary School—Florence B. Bowden, Helping Teacher, Cumberland County, New Jersey (20 min.)

Language Study in the High School—Robert W. Rounds, Oneonta State Teachers College, Oneonta, New York (20 min.)

Language Study in College—Aileen Traver Kitchin, Teachers College, Columbia University (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Blanche H. Dow, Northwest Missouri State Teachers College, Maryville, Missouri; Harrison L. Reinke, Principal, Fay School, Southborough, Massachusetts; Luella B. Cook, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

7. *Fostering Individuality through Speaking and Writing*

*Presiding*, Belle McKenzie, West Seattle High School, Seattle, Washington.

*Secretary*,

Speaking and Writing in the Elementary Schools—Julia Weber, Department of Public Instruction, Warren County, New Jersey, Author of *My Country School Diary* (20 min.)

High-School Writing in Prose and Verse—Rosemary Denniston, Chatham Hall, Chatham, Virginia (20 min.)



Guiding the College Student—Esther M. Raushenbush, Sarah Lawrence College (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): George E. Murphy, Humboldt State College, Arcata, California; Ellen M. Geyer, University of Pittsburgh; Winifred H. Nash, Dorchester High School for Girls, Dorchester, Massachusetts.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

*8. Values in the Modern World: Guiding Pupils to Moral Resources in Literature*

*Presiding*, Mark Neville, John Borroughs School, St. Louis, Missouri.

*Secretary*, Reba Eaton, Passaic High School, Passaic, New Jersey.

Developing Spiritual Values in Children—Sister M. Francis Loretto, S. S. J., Supervisor, Sister of St. Joseph, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia (20 min.)

Literature in Training the Emotions—Angela M. Broening, Forest Park High School, Baltimore, Maryland, Chairman of the Council's Committee on the Place of English in American Education (20 min.)

Literature Basic in Education—Denham Sutcliffe, Kenyon College (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Sister M. Cornelia, S. L., Principal, St. Croan's School, St. Louis, Missouri; Louise M. Rosenblatt, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York; J. Milton French, Rutgers University.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

*9. Values in the Modern World: Studying Periodicals and Television*

*Presiding*, Max J. Herzberg, Principal, Weequahic High School, Newark, New Jersey, Chairman of the Council's Committee on Radio.

*Secretary*,

The Changing Newspaper—Dr. Lloyd M. Felmly, Editor, *Newark Evening News* (15 min.)

A Magazine Editor's Code—William A. H. Birnie, Editor, *Woman's Home Companion* (15 min.)

The Present Status of Television—Noran Kersta, Manager, Television Department, National Broadcasting Company (15 min.)

Educational Possibilities of Television—Sterling Fisher, Assistant Public Service Counselor, National Broadcasting Company (15 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Kay M. Saunders, John Marshall High School, Rochester, New York; Caroline M. Doonan, Newton High School, Newton, Massachusetts; Regis Boyle, Eastern High School, Washington, D. C., Vice-President, National Association of Journalism Directors of Secondary Schools.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

10. *Values in the Modern World: Studying Motion Pictures and Other Audio-Visual Aids*

*Presiding*, Nathan A. Miller, Little River Junior High School, Miami, Florida, Chairman of the Council's Committee on Audio-Visual Aids.

*Secretary*,

Have Education and the Movies Come Closer Together in the Past Half Decade?—Edgar Dale, Ohio State University (20 min.)

A Demonstration of Audio-Visual Aids, With Comment by Teachers Who Have Used Them in the Classroom.

Discussion (5 min. each): John L. Jenkins, Director of Audio-Visual Education, Bronxville Public Schools, Bronxville, New York; Hardy Finch, Greenwich High School, Greenwich, Connecticut; Edward G. Bernard, Office of Superintendent of Schools, New York City; Alexander B. Lewis, Central High School, Newark, New Jersey.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

11. *English in the Education of Adults*

*Presiding*, Paul A. Witty, Northwestern University, Chairman of the Council's Committee on Illiteracy.

*Secretary*, Frederick B. Rawson, Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, New Hampshire.

New Outlook in Adult Education—Alain Locke, Howard University, President of the American Association for Adult Education (15 min.)

High-School English for the Veteran—Iredell L. Aucott, Benjamin Franklin High School, Philadelphia (15 min.)

Adult Education and the World Scene—C. O. Arndt, United States Office of Education (15 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Everett C. Preston, Director of Adult Education, State of New Jersey; Ambrose Caliver, United States Office of Education.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

12. *Preparing Teachers of English for Our Times*

*Presiding*, Ida A. Jewett, Teachers College, Columbia University.

*Secretary*, Sister Constance Mary, I. H. M., Little Flower High School, Philadelphia.

A Training Program for Teachers of Communication Skills—John C. Gerber, State University of Iowa (20 min.)

Preparing the Teacher of Literature—Herbert E. Fowler, State Teachers College of Connecticut, New Britain.

A Language Arts Program for Elementary School Teachers—Marian Emory Shea, New Jersey State Teachers College, Newark (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Miriam B. Booth, Supervisor of Secondary School English, Erie, Pennsylvania, Chairman of the Council's Committee on Supervision; Jessie Boutillier, Central Commercial and Technical High School, Newark, New Jersey; Blanche Trezevant, Supervisor, English and Language Arts, State of Louisiana.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

### 13. *Current Research in the Teaching of English*

*Presiding*, Conrad Seegers, Associate Dean, Teachers College, Temple University.

*Secretary*, Don S. Hitchner, East Orange High School, East Orange, New Jersey.

Research in Language for the Teachers of English—Lou LaBrant, New York University.

Signs, Symbols, and Teachers of English—Lennox Grey, Teachers College, Columbia University (20 min.)

Some Results of a Twelve-Year Study of Children's Reading Preferences—George W. Norvell, Supervisor of English, University of the State of New York (20 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): Dana O. Jensen, Dean, Washington University, St. Louis; Ernest A. Choate, Principal, Fitler School, Philadelphia; M. R. Trabue, Pennsylvania State College.

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

### 14. *Does Reading Tire You? Laboratory Reports, Illustrated with Technicolor Film*

*Presiding*, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Secretary-Treasurer of the Council.

*Secretary*, Crosby E. Redman, Haverford School, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

Educational Implications of a Three-Year Study of Eye Fatigue—Leonard Carmichael, President of Tufts College, Director of the Tufts Laboratory of Sensory Psychology (50 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each): A. B. Herr, The Reading Clinic, New York University; Sister Mary Louise, S. L., Webster College, Webster Groves, Missouri; Marion C. Sheridan, New Haven High School, New Haven, Connecticut; Evelyn I. Banning, Watertown High School, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Question and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

### ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 4:15 P. M.

(All members of the Council are urged to attend this meeting)

### EVENING INTERLUDE—MUSIC, DRAMA, POETRY 8:00 P. M.

(A banquet may be substituted)

Music

Poetry in these Times—

Seeing Things—John Mason Brown, Author, Lecturer, Dramatic Critic.

Light refreshments and social hour

(Dress optional)

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 10:00-11:00 P. M.**

(All members of the Council are invited to attend this meeting)

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30**

**SECTION MEETING, 9:00-11:30 A. M.**

**1. Elementary Section**

*Presiding*, Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota, Chairman of Elementary Section of the Council.

*Secretary*,

Children's Contributions to Elementary School General Discussion—Harold V. Baker, Principal, Elementary School, New Rochelle, New York (25 min.)

All Good Books Have Social Significance for Children—Helen Ferris, Junior Literary Guild (25 min.)

Language and the Social Development of Young Children—Barbara Biber, Author of *Child Life in School* (25 min.)

Discussion (5 min. each):

Questions and Comment from the Floor (30 min.)

Section Business Session

**ANNUAL LUNCHEON, 12:15-3:00 P. M.**

*Presiding*, Helene W. Hartley, President of the Council.

Music

Invocation

Address: (subject to be announced)—Howard Fast, Novelist and Biographer.

The Pursuit of Peace—Edward R. Murrow, Vice-President, Columbia Broadcasting System; Analyst of World Affairs.

Presentation of NCTE Radio Award

**MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**4:00-6:00 and 8:00-10:00 P. M.**

*Five Years of Visual Aids for English*

A continuous showing by makers of material: Thursday, November 28, 12 noon to 8:50 P. M.; Friday, November 29, 12 noon to 8:50 P. M.; Saturday, November 30, 9:00 A. M. to 1:50 P. M.

Exhibitors: Bell and Howell Company, Brandon Films, British Information Service, Coronet Instructional Films, Curriculum Films, Inc., Encyclopaedia Britannica Films Inc., Nu-Art Films Inc., Pictorial Films Inc., Popular Science, Teaching Film Custodians, Young America Films Inc.

## The Educational Scene

The week beginning November 10 has been designated for the twenty-sixth observance of American Education Week. It should be the occasion for all citizens to visit their schools and to give thought to the theme selected for this year's observance, "Education for the Atomic Age." A play for the elementary grades, written by Professor Solomon Simonson, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Iowa, entitled *The Circus or the Jungle* may be obtained from the National Education Association for twenty-five cents. Recordings, radio scripts, moving trailers, leaflets, and pamphlets may also be obtained at moderate cost from the Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Reprints from the April issue of *School Life* of a list of teaching aids available from various government departments and agencies and suggestions for obtaining, circulating, using, and storing teaching materials are available from the U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

A timely booklet entitled *More Than Tolerance*, reporting a survey made by the National Education Association Research Division of promising school practices in the area of inter-group relations has recently been issued by the NEA Commission on the Defense of Democracy through Education. It may be secured from the Association at fifty cents a copy.

A valuable new publication for elementary teachers is announced by the United States Office of Education: *How to Build a Unit of Work*, by Ruth Strickland, of Indiana University. The pamphlet illustrates the principles of unit organization for work with younger children, for middle grade children, and for older boys and girls. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government

Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for fifteen cents per copy. . . . *Racial Myths*, by Mary Ellen O'Hanlon, OT, is a 32-page pamphlet devoted to the refutation of erroneous notions concerning the subject of race. Rosary College Book Store, Rosary College, River Forest, Illinois. Twenty-five cents each. . . . *Sense and Nonsense About Race*, by Ethel J. Alpenfels, with drawings by Louise E. Jefferson, one of the series of study and action pamphlets on race relations published by the Friendship Press, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., for twenty-five cents each. . . . *A Bibliography of Books for Children* is a 100-page bulletin listing some 900 selected and approved books for children, ages 2-14, along with publication facts and a brief annotation. The 1946 revised edition was compiled by LuVerne Crabtree Walker and Herbert S. Zim. Seventy-five cents each. Published by the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

The Children's Reading Service of 106 Beekman Street, New York 7, N. Y., offers (1) a large combined book exhibit at state and regional teachers' meetings, presenting the books of over forty major publishers in a manner "suited to school need"; (2) a specially designed catalogue carefully annotated for school use; and (3) a central source from which schools may order books from all publishers.

A new bulletin entitled *Growing Up Safely* has been prepared by a joint committee of the Association for Childhood Education and the National Commission on Safety of the National Education Association. It discusses the three areas of child development, (1) learning to control and use one's body, (2) learning to use and care for materials and equipment, and (3) developing cooperative



attitudes in work and play. The bulletin, which sells for fifty cents each may be obtained from the Association at its Washington address.

On September 5 the late John S. O'Brien was announced as the recipient of the Young Reader's Choice Award for 1946, when the Pacific Northwest Library Association held their annual meeting in Vancouver, B. C., September 4-6. The Children's and School Librarian's section of the Association found that his "Return of Silver Chief" was the most popular of recent books published between 1942-1943, among the boys and girls of the Pacific Northwest during the past year.

The Young Reader's Choice Award is made yearly through the generosity and interest of the late Harry Hartman, Bookseller, of Seattle, Washington. The first award was made in 1940, when Dell McCormick won recognition for his popular "Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe." Since then, the recipients have been Florence and Richard Atwater for "Mr. Popper's Penguins" in 1941; Laura Ingalls Wilder for "By the Shores of Silver Lake" in 1942; Eric Knight for "Lassie Come-Home" in 1943; Walter Farley for "Black Stallion" in 1944; and Marie McSwigan for "Snow Treasure" in 1945.

The 1947 Annual Seminar on Developmental Reading will be conducted by the Reading Clinic Staff, Department of Psychology, Temple University, from February 3 to February 7, inclusive. Lectures, demonstrations, and discussions will be used to develop the central theme: *Differentiated Corrective and Remedial Reading*.

Topics for successive days are: Approaches to Analysis of Reading Disabilities, The An-

alysis Program, Case History, Social and Emotional Correlates, Physical and Neurological Factors, Capacity for Reading, Reading and General Language Achievement, Classification of Reading Problems, Remedial and Corrective Procedures. The activities of the Institute will be differentiated to meet the needs of classroom teachers, remedial teachers, school psychologists, supervisors, administrators, neurologists, and vision specialists.

Nationally known specialists in reading and related fields will conduct the seminars and demonstrations.

Enrollment is limited by advanced registration. For copies of the program and other information regarding this one week Institute, write to Dr. Emmett Albert Betts, Reading Clinic, Temple University, Philadelphia 22, Pennsylvania.

The Periodical Department of the Kansas City Public Library would like to receive copies of the *Elementary English Review* for November, 1943 and February, 1946. Anyone who has these copies to spare should write to Miss C. Irene Zorn of the Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Here are the Junior Literary Guild Selections for the month of November, 1946: for boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age, *What To Do Now*, by Tina Lee, Doubleday, \$2.00; for boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age, *The Picture Story of Holland*, by Dola de Jong, Reynal and Hitchcock, \$2.00; for older girls, 12 to 16 years of age, *The Sea Is Blue*, by Marie A. Lawson, Viking, \$2.00; and for older boys, 12 to 16 years of age, *The Burro Tamer*, by Florence Hayes, Random, \$2.25.

## Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Elizabeth Guilfoile, Phyllis Fenner, Dorothy E. Smith, Charlemae Rollins, Jean Gardiner Smith, Audrey F. Carpenter, Frances E. Whitehead, Helen Renthal, Kathryn E. Hodapp, Hannah M. Lindahl, and Ivah Green.]

### For Teachers

*Subject Index to Books for Primary Grades:*

*First Supplement.* By Eloise Rue. American Library Association, \$1.25.

This pamphlet supplements the Subject Index to Books for Primary Grades which was published in 1943. It lists more than 225 titles published from late 1942 through early 1946, and indexes them under subject headings. One third of the titles listed are recommended for first or second purchase. Symbols designate the difficulty levels of the books and whether they are usable in the hands of the children or the teacher. The relative values of pictures and text are also indicated. This brief compilation is of much practical value to teachers and librarians.

E. G.

### For Children

*The Wonderful Day.* By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illustrated by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, \$2.00.

Of all the stories about Sally . . . *Away Goes Sally*, *Five Bushel Farm*, *The Fair American* and *The White Horse* I think this new one is my favorite. It seems so just right in every way. There are the same people, the aunts, Uncle Joseph, Sally, Andrew, and Pierre. Even the Indian children and the peddler come into it. The background is Maine, Five Bushel Farm. Sally is growing up. Andrew has begun to notice Sally and resent, ever so slightly, the return of Pierre, now a young nobleman. It is the story of a single day. A party has been planned to welcome back Captain Patterson and Pierre. Sally and Andrew ride out to give the invitations. On the way they find out something which sends them riding at topspeed to save Uncle Joseph from an unscrupulous stranger.

As in the other stories, the people are real, the plot very sufficient, and the ending

the right one. Helen Sewell's illustrations are lovely, and there are the usual delightful poems by the author between the chapters.

P. F.

*Chitter Chat Stories.* By Margaret Cabell Self. Illustrated by Virginia Grilley. Dutton, 1946, \$1.75.

In the town of Chitter Chat lived an amiable baker and his wife, a widow with eleven children, a Sage and a Simpleton, besides some other folks. In each of the four short stories the baker gets into difficulty somewhat in the manner of the Peterkin family. Once his elegant coat tails were caught when the door slammed behind him. Another time he planted a garden and beets grew in the row marked "carrots," and carrots grew in the row marked "beets." Then there was the day when Jasmine, his mare, upset the bakery cart in the ditch and she couldn't get up because her foreleg was tangled in the reins. Finally, a customer ordered a dozen *blue* Santa Claus cookies, and the baker's wife put on *red* icing by mistake.

Who do you suppose was his Lady from Philadelphia? Was it the Sage who spoke only once a day, or was it the Simpleton who went fishing?

These delightful stories, moving gently but swiftly, are sure to have a long and happy life. The delicate black and white illustrations have a Victorian flavor as do the tales themselves.

D. E. S.

*The Avion My Uncle Flew.* By Cyrus Fisher. Illustrated by Richard Floethe. Appleton-Century, \$2.50.

Johnny Littlehorn, fourteen, of Wyoming, is taken to France by his parents at the end of World War Two. His mother is French, and Johnny is to spend the summer with his French Uncle, Paul, who is building an "avion" (glider). Johnny does not want to go. He does not like French and he also feels sorry for himself because of a lame leg. Everything turns out different. Mystery begins even before he leaves Paris. He meets two children his own age and has a wonderful summer, learning French and learning also to walk without

crutches. There is plenty of excitement and lots of humor. There are a great many French words, and an increasing number as the story goes on, with the idea, I suppose, that the boy reading will know a lot by the time he is through. The story is told by Johnny.

I am curious if children will like it as well as grownups. I myself read until late to finish it, but the only boy I know of who has read it wrote me, "It was boring and I did not finish it. I think it was because it has so many French words in it that it was uninteresting." Of course, that is only one man's opinion, but he was a "good" man. I have a feeling it is a bit patronizing to boys, and laughs at them a bit. Also, isn't it an obscure title? I really am curious as to how boys will take to it. Let me know.

P. F.

*Greylock and the Robins.* By Tom Robinson. Illus. by Robert Lawson. Viking, \$2.00.

Greylock is the author's sleek, grey and white, short-haired cat who ran true to cat nature when he discovered a plump young robin sitting on the ground after an unsuccessful trial flight. Of course he stalked it, crouched, and was ready to spring, but he didn't count on the quick-witted Mother Robin who out-smarted him. She distracted his attention, she teased him, she lured him almost to his own destruction.

The beautiful water-color paintings by Robert Lawson are in complete harmony with the story, pointing up the highlights with understanding and delightful humor. It is a book that will be loved to tatters and cherished for years.

D. E. S.

*Bamboo Gate.* By Vanya Oakes. Illustrated by Dong Kingman. The Macmillan Co., \$2.00.

When Koo-Ling and his water-buffalo help build the Burma Road and his village gets a coveted scroll; when Elder Brother bravely goes alone on the Coughing Dragon taking his geese to the market where he is offered paper instead of money; or when Little Monkey writes a letter to Jonnie in far-off San Francisco, we see how heroically the children of modern China are trying to understand the strange new customs brought on by the war.

Although the children are often confused by the telephone, the trains, airplanes, etc., they are bravely cooperating and these stories

show how other children may pass through the "Bamboo Gates" of China to a world of truer understanding. Illustrated by a distinguished Chinese artist. For grades 6-8.

C. R.

*Keep Singing, Keep Humming.* By Margaret Bradford and Barbara Woodruff. Illustrated by Lucienne Bloch. William R. Scott, \$2.00.

This is a collection of play songs and story songs. The play songs are the kind of songs all children make up as they play, songs of horses, of transportation, of the seasons. The story songs are adaptations of songs best liked by children such as Oh Susannah, Billy O, Billy Boy. Both sections will be very useful to the kindergarten and first grade teachers and to parents as well. The illustrations make it a very attractive book.

P. F.

*Waikaima and the Clay Man.* By Ernest Balintuma Kalibala and Mary Gould Davis. Illustrated by Avery Johnson Longmans, Green and Company, \$2.00.

Teachers and storytellers looking for new material will welcome this distinguished collection of 13 African folk tales gathered from the Baganda tribe of East Africa. They have been collected and retold by an African scholar with the help of Mary Gould Davis, outstanding editor and specialist in story-telling. The collection includes several adventures of Waikaima (the rabbit); Why Monkeys Live in Trees, The Lamb that Talked, How the Elephant Lost his Hind End, and others. They are similar to the Uncle Remus but are not written in dialect. In the appendix the author offers some story-telling suggestions that are interesting and quite different from the generally accepted techniques. Recommended for all ages.

C. R.

*The Thirteenth Stone; A Story of Rajputana.* By Jean Bothwell. Illus. by Margaret Ayer. Harcourt, \$2.00.

A fast moving story of modern India. As Jivan enters his thirteenth year, he begins the adventures which lead him to his own people. There is enough background of the country to add some value to story. The swiftness of plot plus the large type will make it a usable book with slow readers in the upper grades. Grades 5-9.

J. G. S.

*Augustus Hits the Road.* By Le Grand. Illustrated by the Author. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

Augustus' father traded his gasoline station for a trailer and a flourishing business of making plaster pigs, Indians, MacArthur heads, and other knick-knacks. On the road the father is falsely arrested as a counterfeiter and put in jail. Augustus, with the aid of Glorianna, his little sister, his gypsy friend, and a dancing bear, tracks down the real culprit. This book has realistic humor for small boys. Although it is written in a slangy, slapstick vernacular, it will perhaps be useful as a "stepping-stone book" for the slow reader, or the comic-book reader in grades 5 and 6. The ninth book in this series.

C. R.

*Gigi in America.* By Elizabeth Foster. Illustrated by Phyllis Cote. Houghton, Mifflin Company, \$2.00.

When your feet outgrow the stirrups, you can't hear the Merry-go-round horses talk, but little children can hear and tell the grown-ups what the horses say. That's how we know about Gigi's adventures in America, traveling with gypsies, meeting the Indians, losing his friends, and finding them again. The second story of Gigi, the most beloved of all merry-go-round horses, is told with great charm and is deeply satisfying. Highly recommended for ages 10 to 12.

C. R.

*Why Teddy Bears are Brown.* By Inga-Lill and George Barker. Crowell, \$1.00.

Teddy bears were originally white all over, according to this story, and might be yet if it hadn't been for one on Santa's farm. He fell into a pan of chocolate Mrs. Santa had left to cool, and was brown from top to toe except where he licked with his tongue around his mouth. Teddy bears have been that way ever since.

This sunny little book has lots of yellow in it, and engaging illustrations of chubby bears. The format and the story are most attractive and while it is simply done, the humor of the little bear's naughtiness will appeal to children. After all, who has not stuck his finger into a pan of fudge!

A. F. C.

*Harriett.* By Charles McKinley, Jr. With Pictures by William Pene DuBois. 44 pages. Viking Press, \$2.00.

Am I getting old? I am sure of it. Am I

beginning to lose that sense of wonder that Kenneth Grahame said we must keep? I thought this book foolish. In fact, I felt a bit embarrassed by its silliness. But the children . . . ah, that was a different story . . . said "It's neat." When I asked them why they liked it they said, "Well, you see, it's about a horse who loved to dance and go to tea parties, and especially she loved hats. Just like a woman. She worked in London until she retired to the country with Mr. Edward. On her birthday they had a party for her and Mr. Edward gave her a most beautiful hat trimmed with *real* flowers." "It's a nonsense story," they add for my enlightenment.

Now haven't I been fair? I should add that the pictures are a real part of the book and very William Pene DuBois-ish.

P. F.

*The Silver Strain.* By Kathrene Pinkerton. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.00.

Fox Island in the loveliness of summer, the red glory of autumn and the cold grip of winter! This is a junior novel with character development plus aroused and sustained plot interest. (The latter may be due to the book's predecessors, for Mrs. Pinkerton has written four books concerning this family, beginning with *Adventure North*.) The disasters of a cave in, a moose invasion and an epidemic of distemper strike the Fox Farm and the royal silver stain disappears in favor of the commoner cross fox. New silvers are imported to insure the silver strain and the story ends with a righted Jackman Fox Farm and a righted love affair. The book has no literary merit, yet its local color and plot are excellent. For 12 and 13 year old boys and girls.

F. E. W.

*Let's Find Out: a First Picture Science Book.*

By Herman and Nina Schneider. Pictures by Jeanne Bendick. William R. Scott, \$1.25.

Of all the Scott books for little children this is my favorite. We realize more and more that children are interested in everything going on about them. This first book of science answers with words and pictures the questions many children ask. What makes fog? What makes airplanes go? What happens when metal is heated? Where does the heat go when something cools off? There are simple experiments for the child to do at home. A



child who couldn't read could pretty well figure them out. It was nice that this book got a Book Festival Award.

P. F.

*The Little Fireman.* Story by Margaret Wise Brown. Pictures by Esphyr Slobodkina. William R. Scott, \$1.25.

This is the story of a big fireman and a little fireman. The big fireman does things and the little fireman does them too . . . in a little way. And everything the little fireman does is told in little type. This is for the pre-school child but the children just learning to read like it. They love the surprise at the end especially.

P. F.

*Sandy of San Francisco.* By Frances Cavanah. Illustrated by Pauline Jackson. David McKay, \$1.00.

This is the kind of story I resent. It is based on the old idea that children must have facts doctored up to make them read them. And it isn't so. This is one of a series of stories telling about Historic Cities. Facts about San Francisco are given through having Sandy shown around it by a Chinese boy. When Sandy's uncle fails to meet the boat from Honolulu Sandy goes home with a Chinese friend. While they are trying to find Sandy's uncle (whose name is Sam Smith, and there are a lot of Sam Smiths) Sandy "does the town."

P. F.

*Washington Irving: Boy of Old New York.* By Mabel Cleland Widdemer. Illustrated by Charles V. John. Bobbs-Merrill, \$1.50.

This is a biography for younger children. It tells of the hero's young days and briefly brings him to manhood and fame. It shows the life of the times in New York, about 1787. Irving, as a boy even, had a lively imagination and turned everything into stories.

With such material the author should have been able to do a more inspired job. The information seems dragged in, and to me, Irving was not the alive vital person he must have been.

P. F.

*Egg to Chick.* By Millicent E. Selsam. International Publishers, \$1.00.

In this book the development of the egg cell into the newborn chick is clearly and attractively presented, for children from 7 to 10. The illustrations are profuse and to the

point. A welcome addition to the all-too-sparse literature for children on propagation.

H. R.

*Masha's Stuffed Mother Goose.* Garden City Publishers, \$1.00.

A four year old friend of mine who recently had had a bad fall requiring several stitches, leafed through this book one rainy afternoon. She looked up after a time. "What happened to these animals? Did they have a bad fall too?" That pretty much expresses my feeling about Masha's Stuffed Mother Goose. There seems to me to be little need for such an edition. However, the idea is unusual and cleverly executed. It may appeal to adults, but children are not likely to enjoy it too much because the distorted illustrations make the familiar Mother Goose figures unrecognizable. The selection of verses is good and well indexed.

H. R.

*Triumph Clear.* By Lorraine Beim. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.00.

Marsh Evans is struck by infantile paralysis. She has been planning on college, and a career on the stage. This is the story of her struggle to regain not only her health, but to adjust herself mentally to her handicap. The book presents an excellent picture of life at the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation. The treatment borders on the sentimental, but the subject matter is timely and interesting. Girls in their early teens will enjoy the love story that runs through it.

H. R.

*The Gift of the Golden Cup.* By Isabelle Lawrence. Illustrated by Charles V. John. Bobbs-Merrill Company, \$2.00.

Sorted out and put down in order, the facts of this story are quite exciting, but somehow in the telling, there seemed so much of a muchness I found it hard to follow. It is a story of pirates 2000 years ago, during the time of Julius Caesar. The Romans under Pompey organized a fleet to overcome the pirates. The story mostly concerns Atia and her seven year old brother who, in attempting to warn their brother's wedding party of pirate danger, are themselves captured. It is a story of slaves and uprisings, of Athens as well as Rome, of various historic characters. I feel that the author tried to put in too much, and in so doing spoiled her story. It is for older children.

P. F.



*Basketfull: The Story of Our Foods.* By Irmengarde Eberle. Illustrated by Marion R. Kohs. Crowell, \$2.00.

This attractive book tells in an interesting way how many of our fruits and vegetables developed, how man learned to use them and improve them. The stories are full of adventure, the courage of fishermen, the adventure of the cattlemen, where sugar comes from and when man first learned to use it, and many many other interesting tales and facts. The author has done a good job of it, and librarians and teachers will find it a useful book for all ages.

P. F.

*Five Acre Hill.* By Paul Corey. Morrow, \$2.50.

Many difficulties beset the Woodwards when they decided to build a house in the country. Mr. Byrd, owner of most of the land around them, resented their intrusion and did everything he could to prevent newcomers in the community. The Woodwards succeeded in their plan and many other families followed them. Lively and entertaining story for both boys and girls by the author of *The Red Tractor*. Grades 6-8.

K. E. H.

*Come, Jack.* By Robert McCulloch. Illustrated by Duncan Coburn. Houghton, Mifflin Co., \$2.50.

There are so many excellent dog stories these days one can afford to be choosy. And I would not choose to spend \$2.50 for this one.

Jack looked like a wolf with pointed ears and shaggy gray coat, and he was as wild as a wolf too. He followed his young master when he left West Virginia to go West. When Joselyn, his master, was robbed and beaten, Jack was taken by the thief because he was afraid to let him go. Jack eventually escaped and became wild until a little boy made friends with him. Jack saved the little boy's life and also helped capture the thief who had robbed his first master. The story is confusingly told with too many points of view. I have a feeling a good story might have been made of it.

P. F.

*Once There Was A Little Boy.* By Dorothy Kunhardt. Illustrated by Helen Sewell. Viking, \$2.50.

This beautifully designed and illustrated book contains stories of the Christ Child when he was five. They are based on stories from the Bible and other sources. They show how he played with his brothers, helped in his father's carpenter shop, helped his mother with her household tasks. He carried water from the well, helped his friend the shepherd. All made into little stories which his mother tells him as they sit on the roof of their house at night. They are the kind of stories any child likes to hear, stories about himself and his everyday doings. The tenderest story of all is the story of his birth. "She stood a minute in the doorway of the dark house before she carried him in to bed. Her arms tight about Him." One can almost feel her premonitions.

P. F.

*Conquest. Book One.* By George W. Norvell and Carol Hovious. Illus. by Kurt Wiese. D. C. Heath, \$2.00.

This anthology of literature for junior and senior high schools is the first in a proposed series of six volumes. Every selection has met with the approval of students and adults; perforce she carried Him in to bed. Her arms tight lection. The book is in two parts, Part I consists of stories, poems, essays, and plays grouped under imaginative headings that stimulate interest. Part II consists of units on motion pictures, radio, choral reading, library skills, reading skills, newspaper and magazine reading. Following each section there are pertinent questions and a list of unusual words that occurred in the various selections. These words in turn are cumulated at the end of the book in a glossary that gives their pronunciation and definition.

Teachers of English will find this a helpful text book; the wise ones will use it as a springboard to wider reading enjoyment.

D. E. S.

*The New House in the Forest.* By Lucy Sprague Mitchell. Illustrated by Eloise Wilkin. Simon and Schuster, 25 cents.

This Little Golden Book is the first of a series of Bank Street Books, written and tested by the staff of Bank Street Schools in New York City. Illustrations are gay and colorful and practically tell a story in themselves. The Jenks family build a new home in the woods

while animals of the woods watch their activities and make comments. This reviewer feels that the story would have had more charm had it not been used so obviously to give information on how houses are built. I. G.

*East O' the Sun and West O' the Moon.* By Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen. Illus. by Gregory Orloff. Front. by Th. Kittlesen. Row, Peterson.

The original 1912 edition of this favorite collection of Norwegian folk tales has been completely revised. The story of Peik has been omitted; four others have been added: The Three Princesses of Whiteland, The Doll in the Grass, Lord Peter, and True and Untrue. The type has been reset; the sequence of the stories has been changed; and there are new illustrations by Gregory Orloff who also designed the cover. The book is almost square being seven and one-half inches wide by eight inches high, an awkward size to handle. It is a sturdy book that suggests the peasant origin of the tales. Perhaps someday it will be given a format in keeping with the spirit of the stories. D. E. S.

*The Music Box Book.* By Syd Skolsky. Illus. by Roberta Paflin. Dutton, \$1.50.

This is an attractive book that tells the stories on which six favorite musical compositions are based: Scheherazade, Nutcracker Suite, The Sorcerer's Apprentice, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks. The Introduction describes the instruments of an orchestra and has gay marginal illustrations of most of them. Following all but one of the stories the relation between the music and the action is clearly and succinctly indicated. The illustrations are lively and colorful. Suitable musical recordings of the six works are listed.

The book will be valuable to teachers of musical appreciation, and will be enjoyed by families who take time for music in the home. It has one weakness—its back. It is loosely sewed and its cover, alas! is boards.

D. E. S.

*Up Goes the Curtain.* By Janet Lambert. Dutton, \$2.00.

There's never a dull moment in the "Penny Parrish" books. This time Penny gets a part in a Broadway play. Before rehearsals start she goes home for three weeks to visit her

army family at Fort Knox. There she gets involved in an exciting spy hunt. When she returns to New York she takes her readers backstage with her, through the hard work, the jealousies, the glamor of stage life to the successful first night performance. There are beaux and orchids, parties and picnics, luxury and happy home life—all the ingredients that are relished by girls in their early teens who will indulgently overlook the typographical errors. D. E. S.

*Canada and Her Northern Neighbors.* By Frances Carpenter. American Book Co.

This text book, distinctive for its clear type and excellent photographic reproductions, gives an over-all picture of the country, a brief historical sketch of its settlement and development, and more detailed description of the various provinces and territories and also of Alaska and Greenland. At the end of each chapter there is a concise summary of salient facts such as location, size, geographical features, climate, population, industries, language, education, government, and transportation. A final chapter gives concrete examples of the good neighbor policy that exists—and works—between Canada and the United States.

The end-papers are a specially drawn map of Canada. Maps of the provinces are included in the text. Although the use of the editorial "we" and the introduction of "typical" children weaken the style, it is a readable book packed with accurate and up-to-date information. D. E. S.

*The Petroleum Industry.* By Josephine Perry. Illustrated with photographs. Longmans, Green and Company, \$2.00.

Brief readable account of one of the youngest of the American industries. Beginning with the ancient Egyptians, this is a brief history of the development of petroleum in America. Includes chapters on drilling the wells, methods of production, pumping, pipelines, refining, crude oil, petroleum products, research, marketing and a brief survey of future progress. Excellent supplementary material for Junior and Senior High School. Tenth book in the "America at Work" series. Illustrated with photographs. Indexed.

C. R.

*On to Oregon.* By Honore Morrow. Illustrated by Edward Shenton. Morrow, \$2.50.

Twenty years after its first printing comes a new edition of this book with excellent illustrations adding force and strength to the story. Part of an 1844 wagon train bound for Oregon, the seven Sager children lost their parents in an epidemic of dysentery. Thirteen year old John determined, as the oldest, to carry out his father's dream of settling in the Willamette valley, and keeping the family together. In spite of cruel hardships the little band traveled a thousand miles through the wilderness, and John grew from an irresponsible child to a dependable boy.

Mrs. Morrow has told the story well. Boys of junior high age are held by the strong characterization of the hero, and by the adventures he faced so sturdily. This is superb background material for the period of westward expansion.

A. F. C.

*At the Top of the House.* By Albertine Deletaille, Harcourt Brace, \$1.00.

This picture book for young children is illustrated by the author, and done in black and red, both type and pictures. It is the story of Run-Fast the mouse who gnaws a hole in an Edam cheese and then climbs into the cheese. Gobble-Mice the cat wants to eat the mouse and reaches a paw into the hole. The mouse bites the paw and the cat runs away so Run-Fast is saved.

The story seems almost trivial. The high spotting of words in red would have no meaning for the very young children for whom the book is designed, and older children might be confused by the irregular word patterns. I doubt that it will have much appeal for children.

A. F. C.

*The Donkey Cart.* By Robert Bulla. Illustrated by Lois Lenski. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., \$2.00.

A red cart and a small brown donkey made the summer a happy one for Linda and David. Their summer experiences on their Uncle's farm also included going to the county fair where they won a prize for the pig they had trained to do tricks. The easy songs, also written by the author, add appeal to this little book. Many primary teachers will make use of it in relation to the social studies program.

E. G.

*Chukchi Hunter.* By Dorothy Stall. Illustrated by George M. Mason. William Morrow & Co., \$2.00.

A walrus hunt in a motorboat is the high point in the life of Ankat, a boy of the lonely tribe of Chukchi, who live on the eastern tip of Siberia. Research into primitive customs and artifacts gives background to a well written book for children of the ages 8-12. The author has caught the dramatic moment in the life of the people, the point at which the handmade implements of a hunting tribe first give way to the power of the machine from "outside."

E. G.

*Fighting Squadron.* By Robert A. Winston. Holiday House, \$2.00.

Boys and girls who have some understanding of aviation will enjoy a squadron leader's story of the carrier combat experiences of his Task Force, the "Meat Axe Squadron," which had as its slogan "Cut 'em down." Vivid and real are the accounts of the battles of the American fighters with the Japanese planes in the Pacific.

E. G.

*River Boy of Kashmir.* By Jean Bothwell. Illustrated by Margaret Ayer. William Morrow & Co., \$2.00.

The river boy of Kashmir is the small hero of Miss Bothwell's first book, *Little Boat Boy*. In this one, Hafiz goes to the River School as a boarder and the old family feud with the money lender is finally ended. The author writes with fine simplicity of the ways of the people of India. Each smallest reaction, color and sound she catches and transposes onto paper. There is a thing for us to see. Small boys are fundamentally alike no matter what their country. For 9 and 10 year olds.

F. E. W.

*Spelling We Use, Grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* By Ernest Horn and Ernest J. Ashbaugh. J. B. Lippincott, \$.56 each.

Developing the child's interest in his need for spelling, directing him in an effective method of study, providing for differences in rate of learning, integrating spelling with all the school areas requiring writing, giving dictionary experience, and providing training in phonetic analysis are some of the excellent features of this new series of spelling textbooks. Special mention should be made of the authors' provision for systematic review, which is so essential to a successful program in spelling.

H. M. L.

*Builders of the Old World.* By Gertrude Hartman. Illustrated by Marjorie Quennell. D. C. Heath and Company, \$1.80.

This fine middle grade history contains twelve units from "Days before History" to "Finding a New World." There are many attractive illustrations in soft colors. Type is large, on well spaced pages. Material is written in simple narrative style in children's vocabulary. Following each chapter are discussion topics calling for clear thinking, also interesting "Things to Try," and a "Quiz Yourself." As a history text, this book should have a strong appeal to children.

I. G.

*The Taxi That Hurried.* By Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Irma S. Black, and Jessie Stanton. Illustrated by Tabor Gergely. Simon and Schuster. New York, 25 cents.

This Little Golden Book is the second of the Bank Street Books. It is a tale of how the taxi rushed through New York City's traffic to get Tom and his Mother to the railroad station in time to catch a train. There is some

repetition of conversational phrases done in jingle. For children very familiar with taxicabs, this story would have appeal. The illustrations are superior to the narrative.

I. G.

*Jungle Journey.* By Jo Besse McElveen Waldeck. Illus. By Kurt Wiese. Viking, \$2.50.

In an attempt to reduce the style of factual material to the level of young readers, the author has failed to capture the charm of her earlier book *Little Jungle Village*, and has not given a readable enough account to interest the slow reader. The style is very self conscious with a superfluity of *I's*. A decided weakness is the forced use of dialect with Negro conversation, although this device is not used with the Indians. Part of the material on the preparation for a journey of exploration and the journey itself is already available in Mrs. Waldeck's brief book *Exploring the Jungle*. If material is needed on the jungles of South America, the book can be used with such a unit. Grades 7-9.

J. G. S.

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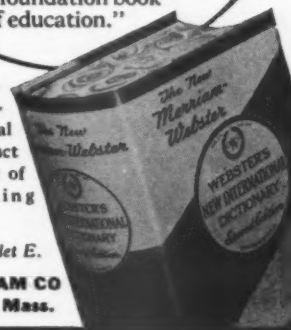
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